Consumers' Guide

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JAN. 27, 1936

Are Food Prices Too High ?

"For the general welfare, it is important that the products of the Nation's business whether in agriculture, industry, science, or the arts, be fitted to the needs of the consumers. Ill-planned or unplanned production, disregarding or unaware of consumers' actual needs, makes for waste and maldistribution of supplies."

Henry A. Wallace,
Secretary of Agriculture

THE EFFECT of the decisions of the United States Supreme Court of January 6 (United States vs. Butler, known as the "Hoosac Mills Case") and of January 13 (Rickert Mills vs. Collector, known as the "Rice Case"), insofar as consumers are concerned, is discussed in a general way under the topic "Your Food Bill" on page 18.

DECISION in the Hoosac Mills Case brought to an end the production control programs for basic agricultural crops, which had been operating since the passage of the Agricultural Adjustment Act on May 12, 1933, and the processing taxes on wheat, cotton, tobacco, corn and hogs, sugar, peanuts, rice, and rye, put into effect at different times since that date. This decision did not affect marketing agreements or any of the other powers under the Agricultural Adjustment Act which fall under the "commerce clause" of the Constitution and not under the taxing power of Congress.

UNDER the second decision, in the "Rice Case", the 180 million dollars which the Courts enjoined collectors from collecting and ordered paid into Court were required to be returned to processors. It follows that about 50 million dollars of taxes, in addition, not paid on their due date, may not now be collected.

THIRTEEN marketing agreements and 12 licenses are in effect for shippers of such farm products as fruits and vegetables. One of the jobs of the AAA is the revision of such agreements and licenses which were developed before the Agricultural Adjustment Act was amended in August 1935. Programs are also being continued or will be formulated for the diversion of "surplus" farm products—those for which there is an inadequate consumer purchasing power—from normal channels of trade.

TWENTY-EIGHT months ago, when we published the first number of the CONSUMERS' GUIDE, we wrote: "The vanishing purchasing power of the farm population has silenced mills and factories, throwing good men out of work. The man in the street, hungrily looking for food, and the man with the hoe, raising more food than he can sell, are in the same predicament. Neither can buy what the other has to sell. Both suffer. The national recovery program is trying to rescue both.

"WHILE the effect of the attack on low earnings of farmers and city workers will be to increase prices, the goal of the Administration is a balanced relationship between producers and consumers."

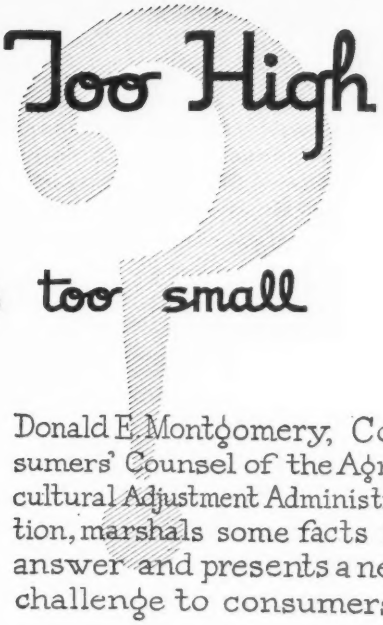
FOR more than two and a half years farmers have been cooperating with the AAA in working toward that "balanced relationship." What has been achieved and what remains to be done is epitomized in the leading article in this issue.

THE EMERGENCY situation confronting agriculture in 1933 is past. The purchasing power of farm prices, which had dropped to its post-war low in March 1933, when the prices farmers were receiving then could buy only half as much as in pre-war years, has improved. In December 1935, farm prices had a purchasing power of 87 percent of their pre-war level.

ACHIEVING and maintaining a balanced relationship remains a goal toward which farmers and consumers must work. The choice of a route to that goal is of major importance to both.

DUE to reorganization necessitated by the decisions of the Supreme Court, the release of this issue of the CONSUMERS' GUIDE, which was scheduled for December 30, has been changed to January 27.

Are Food Prices Too High or are supplies of manufactured goods too small



Donald E. Montgomery, Consumers' Counsel of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration, marshals some facts in answer and presents a new challenge to consumers.

TO the average consumer fair prices are often prices that are continuously shrinking. A retail price is too high if it happens to be higher right now than it was a short time ago. Contrariwise, many producers think they see their prosperity in constantly rising prices.

THIS CONFLICT between producer and consumer goals doesn't make sense. We know well enough that all producers are consumers, and practically all consumers are also producers. Even if this were not the case, it would be common sense for producers and consumers to come to some understanding with each other and to give up the impossible task of trying to ride the same horse at the same time in diametrically opposite directions. That kind of thing is amusing at the circus, but it doesn't buy groceries and it doesn't promote an abundant supply of commodities.

FIRST essential to arriving at an understanding is that each interest speaks for itself. Having for the most part no means of attacking their conflicting problems together, they can hardly do otherwise than go it alone and make the most of their individual viewpoints. Especially is this true of the consumer whose ways and means of getting himself represented in the deliberative processes of Government, trade groups, and courts of law seem always to lag behind the more highly developed methods of other groups.

AGRICULTURE'S and industry's enlarged scope of collective action which has come to pass in the last few years may lead to a more definite drive among consumer groups to develop a representative mechanism of their own. It is to be hoped that it will. But we all recognize the peculiar difficulties which consumer groups must overcome if they are to approach the trade group or the farm group in effectiveness of action.

BUYING commodities for home consumption is probably the most diverse industry in the world. There is no one objective like the wage rate or the schedule of selling prices upon which intelligent consumer interest can concentrate its efforts. It must become expert in all industries and must learn how to treat with all interests, for the act of consuming stands as the end point of all of them and each of them bears rather directly upon it.

NO office in the Federal Government can handle the whole problem of consumer representation, but governmental representation can aid. A new start along that line was made this

year when the President by Executive order set up a new office known as Adviser to the President on Consumer Problems, responsible directly to the Chief Executive, and comprehending within its field of interest all Government activities affecting the consumer. In the final count, however, consumers must learn to speak for themselves, and not only to Government officials but to other economic groups as well.

ARE food prices too high, is a complex question, and the answer to it calls for the consideration of many things. It is both a question of statistics—that is, the measured facts of the past and present—and a question of objectives—that is, our private and public purposes respecting the present and the future. Food prices that are too high for some consumers may not be too high for others; food prices that are low enough for all consumers are probably too low for producers; food prices that are too high for all consumers are obviously too high, also, for producers.

TODAY'S acute interest in the cost of food arises from the fact that food prices have been going up for almost 3 years. In October 1935 food prices were 21 percent higher than in October 1932. During the past year certain food items, notably meat, have increased rather sharply. These spectacular price advances stick in one's mind more acutely than the general level of food costs which in October 1935 were only about 7 percent higher than a year ago.

FOOD PRICES are not the only things that have been moving upwards, however. Factory payrolls climbed 70 percent from October 1932 to October 1935. Farmers' cash income, including benefit payments, moved up 90 percent.

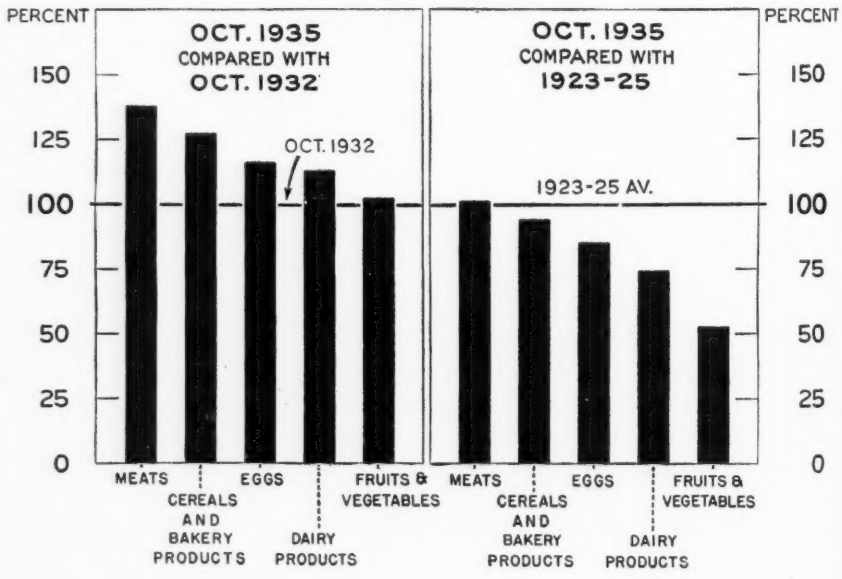
MOST of us agree that conditions in October 1932 were not the kind of conditions that any of us would want to continue. Food prices in that month had fallen 34 percent from their 1923–25 level, but factory payrolls had dropped 55 percent, and farmers' cash income was off more than 60 percent.

BETTER perspective on present costs comes from comparing them with a period which we might be more ready to describe as normal. For this purpose the average for the years 1923 to 1925 is taken to represent conditions before the depression, since data are not yet available on the revised food index for the years 1925 to 1929.

RETAIL food prices are now just 20 percent below the 1923–25 average. Factory payrolls are 25 percent below. Farmers' cash income, including benefit payments, is at the same level as factory payrolls.

PAYROLLS in wholesale and retail trade, compared with 1923–25, are slightly higher than factory payrolls and right on a line with retail food prices. Railroad salaries and wages are considerably lower, and coal-mine

Food Prices



payrolls still lower. Wages in public utilities other than railroads have been reported only since 1929, and compared with that year are relatively higher than either factory payrolls or payrolls in wholesale and retail trade.

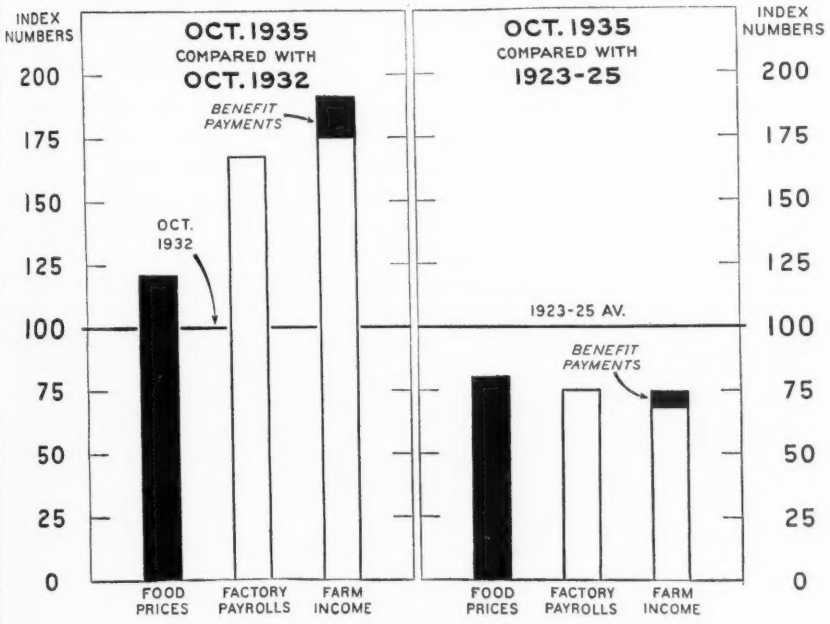
WHILE the average of all food costs is 20 percent below 1923–25, some foods are closer and some are farther away from their predepression level. Meats are 1 percent above 1923–25 costs. Cereals and bakery products are also relatively high, within 6 percent of the 1923–25 average. Eggs are 15 percent below, while dairy products and fruits and vegetables are now selling at prices 26 and 47 percent, respectively, below the prices at which they sold in 1923–25.

FOODS, of course, do not have the only claim to the family purse. Workingmen's families spend about a third of their money on this item and two-thirds on all the other necessities of living. By June 1933, total living costs had fallen about 25 percent from 1923–25, which was much less than the decline (55 percent) in factory payrolls, and the same as the drop in payrolls in wholesale and retail trade. At that time food costs had declined more than any of the six classifications, illustrated on page 7, included in the cost of living index. They were down 35 percent.

FROM June 1933 to July 1935, the latest date for which this index has been reported, the cost of living increased slowly to about 80 percent of the 1923–25 average, or just about 6 points over the 1933 low. Food costs had come up more rapidly than the other five items in the list, but stood in July 1935 at the same level relative to the predepression figure as the cost of living as a whole. The rise in food costs was followed closely by house-furnishing goods (up 16 percent) and by clothing (up 14 percent). Three other items (miscellaneous, fuel and light, and rent), showed resistance to the depression, and with the exception of rent, have continued at a relatively high level.

NOW consider what has happened to the spread between farm prices and retail prices of food commodities. This comparison is based on 10 important foods which constitute a large part of the average American food bill. Figures are not available on all foods. In the "spread" is included the total amount taken for transporting, processing, and marketing of the 10 foods by all those who intervene between the farmer and the consumer.

Food Prices, Factory Payrolls, and Farm Income



TWO things are important to watch in the movement of this spread: One is the actual amount of increase or decrease; the other is the change in the proportion of consumers' dollars going to middlemen. During postwar years and up to the depression, the spread moved along a fairly steady level. The drop in retail values during the depression resulted also in a drop in the margin, and since the

upturn of recovery in 1933 the margin, or spread, has been approaching higher levels again. But the decrease in the spread during the depression was relatively less than the decrease in retail values; that is, the proportion of the consumer's dollar which did not go to the farmer, increased as the depression advanced, and since 1932 has been declining. Present spread between retail and farm values is 9 percent less than the 1923-25 average.

THESE, then, are the statistics that bear on the question, "Are food prices too high?" By these measures the cost of food does not appear to be out of line with other factors measuring the extent of recovery. But these measures do not tell the whole story. They do not take into account the serious unemployment problem with which we are still confronted. Furthermore, they do not reflect the fact that when there is a shortage, as in meats at the present time, it is always the low-income families who must do without. They do not answer the question, how to get an adequate diet to millions of people who are not earning enough money to buy the food they need? There is no doubt that the cost of food remains a very serious matter to large numbers in our population.

THIS is not a new situation. It existed also in 1929 when we flattered ourselves that we were enjoying prosperity. It became much worse as the depression advanced, and while it is certainly better now than it was in 1932, the fact that large numbers of people cannot buy enough food stands as a challenge to anyone in private business or in public office who has the slightest concern for the national welfare.

ECONOMISTS of the Bureau of Home Economics have estimated that to have a satisfactory margin of safety over minimum nutritional requirements, a family would have to be able to spend between $120 and $150 per person per year for food, on the basis of prices prevailing the last quarter of 1934. Since a family of four would probably need a total income above $1,500 a year to be able to spend as much as $135 per person for food, we may inquire how many families were below that level.

LOOKING back to 1929 we find that of the 22 million nonfarm families in the United States 7½ million families had less than $1,500 a year to live on. Food prices in 1929 were 35 percent higher than they were in the last quarter of 1934. On $1,500 a year these families presumably could not buy enough food to provide a satisfactory margin of safety above minimum bodily requirements, unless they sacrificed in an unusual degree in what they spent for other necessities. One-third of all nonfarm families had less income than they needed to buy the diet they need; and that was in the prosperity year of 1929.

OBVIOUSLY this is a broad approximation based upon what we can find out about how people spend their money, how much food they get, and how many families there are at different levels of income. But the exact figure is not the point; the point is that there were large numbers of people in 1929 who did not have sufficient income to buy the food they needed.

IS THE SOLUTION of this grave problem to beat down present food prices, or is it to build up employment and income so that consumers have enough money with which to buy the food they need? That is the real heart of the problem.

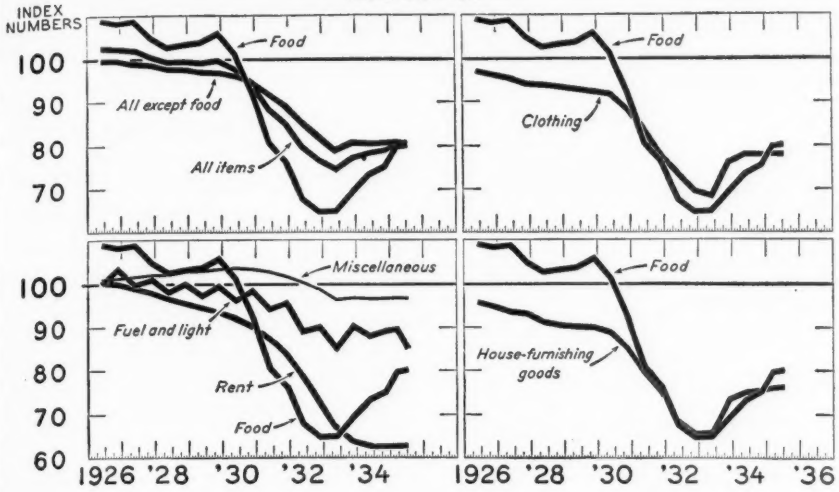
SOLUTION to this problem, intelligent consumers will realize, cannot be found in requiring farmers to sell their products so cheaply that everyone, regardless of income, may buy all the food he needs. Food prices were lower in 1932 than at any time since the war. Even so, millions of people had to go without adequate diet because they lacked sufficient income. Prices received by farmers in that year were even more drastically reduced and farmers were not able to support themselves on what they were then receiving.

THE BURDEN of meeting this problem cannot be placed on the shoulders of agriculture without destroying agriculture itself. No real solution can be found until industry increases its output back to and well above the levels of more normal years and puts the unemployed back to work at useful production. At present agriculture waits upon industry for the upturn in this direction.

PRODUCING or planning to produce enough to meet at least the normal consumption requirements of the past, farmers cannot produce all

Changes in Cost of Living

1923-25=100



that we actually need until industry puts more income into the hands of the unemployed and the undernourished. In 1932 the physical output of the products of industry was 40 percent less than the average output of the 7 years 1923–29. In the same year the physical output of farm products was higher than the 1923–29 average by a fraction of 1 percent. Farmers were still producing not only the usual amounts for domestic consumption but in addition were continuing to produce for foreign markets that were no longer open to them. In 1935, a year still affected in considerable degree by the drought of 1934, the physical volume of farm output was about 90 percent of the 7-year average, and the physical output of industrial products about 85 percent of that average.

ON the assumption that what we all want is the largest output we can produce and get consumed without unnecessary waste of our natural resources, a far more significant understanding of the present state of farm and industrial output, measured in physical terms, is to be had by comparing each of them with the maximum output of recent years. Industrial output reached its peak in 1929; agricultural output in 1931. Estimates for 1935 show that industrial output was 24 percent below 1929, and agricultural output about 17 percent below its 1931 figure.

BY this comparison it can be seen that industry has curtailed more than agriculture, although the necessity of reducing output because of the restriction of export markets fell much more heavily upon agriculture than upon industry.

NO economic group, no economic interest, and no industry can function independently of other economic groups and interests. No one of them can actually promote its welfare by acting as though it performed its functions in isolation, although for the most part that is the way they usually set about to do it. They are like depositors in a shaky bank who, having no way of acting together to carry the institution through its difficulties, rush to protect themselves by withdrawing their deposits, thereby destroying the bank and losing their money. Single concerns within an industry and single industries within the entire industrial field, not having discovered a road to coordinated efforts for increased production, adopt the isolated policies of self-protection which necessarily lead them to restricted production.

AGRICULTURE stands ready to go forward with increased production of industrial and agricultural products when industrial production increases. It is ready to do its part in that balanced increase in farm and factory output by which the standard of living of the entire population can be enormously improved without destroying any element in the population that contributes its share.

THE FARMING industry cannot solve the problem of unemployment and under-consumption. It cannot, without destroying itself, put food on the market at prices so low that even the destitute can get the diet they need. But agriculture right now is helping to make possible a national effort to bring about increased output of all goods and services by continuing to produce and to make available for domestic

[Concluded on page 31]

Good Pickings at White Sales

Guides to stocking your linen closet with sound values for the years to come.

Look through your prospective sheet against the light to see how evenly the number of 'warp' and 'filling' threads are balanced, and whether sizing fills in the gaps with a film between too-sparse threads.

SHEET PURPOSES are the same in every home, but different households attach different relative value to them. The things all homes want in sheets are: Looks, comfort, protection and sanitation between ourselves and our other bedclothing, with as long wear as possible at an original cost we can pay. But different families put these requirements in different order. One may be able to afford to put appearance at the head of the list, while the budgeter whose first consideration is minimum cost may have to leave looks for an incidental place on the list.

SHEET QUALITY is all relative. There is no such things as simple "good quality" in sheets. It all depends on how you want to use the sheet. A tough muslin sheet might seem far from good quality to a home-maker who can afford to pay for the luxurious looks and feel of percale for her guest-room bed, while a mother of romping sons in a summer cottage, operating on a rock-bottom budget, might find that sheet the best quality obtainable. A housewife who laun-

ders her sheets mechanically from beginning to end might better be able to economize on heavier sheets than either the lady whose laundry is a more personal matter and who would therefore need a lighter-weight sheet, easier to handle and wash, or the one who sends out her laundry and paying by the pound prefers a light yet closely woven sheet.

LABELS help determine which sheets answer our individual purposes. The ideal label would carry, along with the brand name and the name and address of the manufacturer, all this information: (1) Minimum tensile strength of warp and filling; (2) minimum thread count of warp and filling; (3) maximum percentage of sizing in the fabric; (4) weight in ounces per square yard of fabric; (5) torn size before hemming; (6) whether the sheet is a "first" or a "second."

IDEAL LABELS do not happen on every sheet counter. But in some way or another a consumer who buys accurately must look for the information lacking on the label. Getting it from the store is one way. Asking may not accomplish all you want, but it registers the consumer drive in the direction of concrete buying information. When the salespeople or the buyer can't tell you, there are still simple consumer tests that give rough answers to some of your questions.

SIZE always appears on labels. It means the size before hemming unless otherwise stated. But whether it is the torn length before hemming or the cut length before hemming is important. If the sheet was torn, it will always be "straight of the goods." If it was cut, it may skewgee into surprising angles after laundering shows up its true shape. Mere "size before hemming" leaves you to investigate for yourself. Look at the hem. If the stitching runs along one thread the whole way across, it's O. K. If it goes slantwise across the thread line, biaswise, beware.

GUIDES in picking sizes:

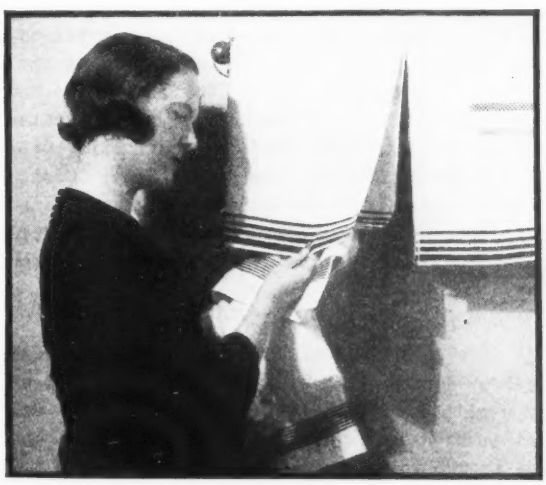
	Inches
Figure the length you need by adding the length of the bed (standard length 74 or 75 inches)	74
plus the depth of the mattress (ordinary mattress is 5 inches deep, inner-spring 6 to 7 inches), multiplied by 2 for the 2 ends of the bed	10
plus allowance for hems (which were added after the labeled size was cut)	5
plus allowance for shrinkage (average 5 inches to sheet)	5
plus allowance for tuck-in (6 to 10 inches each end)	14
	108

These calculations lead you to a sheet 108 inches long, and the more popular 99 inches sheet might be said to be your minimum length.

	Inches
Figure the width you need by adding the width of your bed (standard widths 36, 39, 48, and 54 inches)	39
plus the depth of your mattress (multiplied by 2 for 2 sides)	10
plus tuck-in allowance of 6 to 10 inches per side	12
	61

Sheet 63 inches wide gives you extra tuck-in.

MUSLIN, "fine counts", or percale is the choice in sheet materials. Muslin, the most popular, ranges from light to heavy, and fine to coarse. Percale, not only finer than muslin, but different, is not precisely defined. But consumers can recognize good percale by its light weight in combination with close weave,



The use size of a bathtowel may be much smaller than its outside dimensions, if a non-absorbent border occupies some of its inches.

fine strong even threads, and luxurious smoothness. The "fine counts" come in between.

MEDIUM OR LONG-STAPLE cotton makes all better grades of sheeting. The short yarns, insufficiently twisted, of less durable sheets, show in fuzziness on the surface, unattractively taking on quick greyness with use.

"PURE FINISH" on the label means the minimum amount of sizing or "dressing" in the goods. Good sheets often carry less than 1 percent, but cheap sheets may put on false weight and firmness with heavy fillings such as china clay, up to 30 percent. If the label does not tell you about finish nor percentage of sizing, make your own tests. Rub a piece between your fingers over something dark, and notice whether white powder sifts down. When you hold the sheet to the light, notice whether the spaces between the threads seem filled with film. But only extreme cases of sizing trouble show up in these tests.

"MERCERIZED" means a permanent attractive gloss. "Linen finish" may mean mercerizing or may mean merely temporary gloss. "Percale finish" has no definite meaning. Look on both sides of the material. If they are the same, the finish is more likely to be permanent.

"THREAD COUNT" of 68 by 72 means the sheet was woven of 68 threads to the inch lengthwise (warp) and 72 threads crosswise (filling). The more threads the finer the material. The more equal the number each way the better the "balance," the stronger the material. "64 square" would mean 64 threads each way. Muslin sheets satisfactory for general use in economical homes range from 66 to 76 each way. Percale's high thread count is 100 or more each way.

"TENSILE STRENGTH" means the number of pounds required to break the fabric of the sheet by a method used in textile laboratories. One test showed range of from 27 to 68 pounds one way and 21 to 80 pounds the other way.

WEIGHT per square yard varies from 3 to 5¼ ounces. Too heavy, too tightly woven, and twisted yarns, mean difficult laundry and harsh texture. Light weight with high count of fine, smooth yarns wears well and is easy to launder. Light weight of low count will wash easily but will be sleazy, fuzzy, easy-wrinkling, and short-wearing. All factors including economy considered, the medium-heavy muslin may often be best buy. With washing-machine home laundering, ease of launderability does not count so much. When washing costs are by the pound the balance of economy shifts in the direction of the light, high-count sheets.

COLOR FASTNESS, when color is concerned, should be a written guarantee on the label.

FIRST-GRADE sheets have practically no knots, no uneven yarns, no thick and thin places to cause extra strain and early breakage.

"SECONDS" or "Irregulars" properly classify sheets with noticeable defects in yarn and weave. At a lower price, they may be good buys, but only after thorough examination has shown just what chances you are taking on durability.

UNFAMILIAR BRANDS should be queried as to whether they are "seconds" from a mill selling its "firsts" under well-advertised names.

SELVAGES should be strong, wide, free of extra tension, able to take the extra wear that often makes the selvage first to break.

HEMS on high-quality sheets are evenly folded with the thread, closed at the ends, snugly turned, stitched fine and evenly, and fastened tight.

HEMSTITCHED hems are a luxury since they tear off more quickly. Be sure the hemstitching stops short of the selvage for strength.

SHEETING MATERIAL, bleached and unbleached, can be bought by the yard. The one advantage, of course, is economy. Better-quality sheets can be supplied for the same money plus the labor of hemming them. Also consumers willing to go the limit in economy may use unbleached muslin sheeting, available nowadays only in yard goods. Unbleached sheeting is not

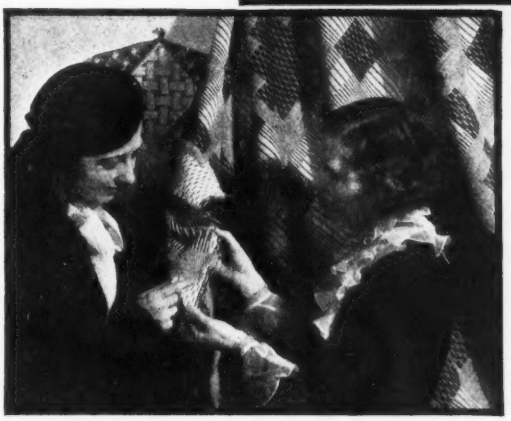
only cheaper but probably a little more durable than the same goods after the bleaching process. But as milling methods improve, the snowy bleached sheeting which most housewives prefer may soon overcome the slight lead unbleached sheeting now holds in durability.

SHEETING comes by the yard, its width sometimes described in terms of the "quarter" or quarter-yard. A "seven-quarter" sheeting would turn out to be 63 inches wide. Making hems top and bottom the same width brightens the prospects for wear, since the sheet will not always be put on the bed the same way, getting the same hard shoulder rubbing in the same places.

Pillow Cases

RULES governing sheet values apply to pillow cases.

SIZES stated on labels, as on sheet labels, refer to length before hemming. Standard sizes are 42 by 36, 42 by 38½, 45 by 36, and 45 by 38½ inches. A 42 by 36 pillow case is one that was 36 inches long before hemming, and 42 inches measured across front and back. To decide the width you need, clasp a tape-measure right around the pillow to be fitted and add 2 inches for the margin that allows the pillow its full softness and saves wear on the case.



Hems tell tales. Look to see if the stitches catch all the raw edges, run with the thread of the goods, and are short enough for firmness. Fourteen to the inch is a good standard.

Choose the size towel that suits your requirements; smaller ones for children cut original cost and laundry bills.

TUBING makes the most practical pillows, since you can shift the spot receiving hardest wear by ripping the end seam and sewing it again with a different fold.

Bedspreads

PURCHASING points in buying a bedspread, along with the obvious selection of appropriate design and price for use, are generous size, substantial edge finish, well-made seams, and good fabric. Even though durability is not the stringent consideration it is in other fabrics getting more violent use and frequent laundering, these points are essential to the attractive appearance of the spread.

SIZES of bedspreads for double beds vary from 80 by 90 inches to 90 by 108 inches. The 102- or 108-inch length allows for covering the pillows, while the 90-inch length does not.

CROOKED-CUT spreads, like sheets, will show their crookedness after washing. Look at the ends of the one you buy to see if they are cut parallel to the crosswise thread.

EDGE FINISHES should do their job. If they are embroidered scallops, the stitching should be close enough and deep enough to anchor all raw edges. Hems should be turned under deep enough to catch the raw edges,

stitched snugly and close to the edge with back stitching at ends for fastening. Shortness of stitches is a gage of quality. Fourteen to the inch is a good average.

SEAMS should be deep enough to hold, but the fewer the seams the less danger of difficult mending jobs.

SMOOTH FABRICS, with regular yarns woven evenly and firmly wear better than uneven, loose fabrics.

Towel Tips

TURKISH TOWELS call for consideration on counts of size, absorptability, durability, and in some cases colorfastness, in connection with price.

BIG TOWELS are necessary to please some bathers, but sizes larger than 24 by 48 are luxuries, and 22 by 44 will keep most people satisfied. Buying towels bigger than necessary is an extravagance. Children can usually handle better the 16 by 30 or 18 by 36 sizes which cut your original costs and your laundry costs.

USEFUL SIZE is not necessarily described by the outside dimensions. Wide non-absorptive borders subtract just that much from the towel's working size.

ABSORPTABILITY lies in the loops all over the surface of the towel. Consumers must draw their own line between spongelike, loose, not-too-twisted loops, and the better-wearing tightly twisted yarns.

DURABILITY depends much on the secure anchorage of each loop in the foundation fabric. Examine your prospective towel to see how closely the loops lie together and whether they are all securely bound into a good firm fabric underneath.

SELVAGES take a large share of bath towel wear. Look at them to see if all threads are bound in and no loose threads give the doubts away along the edge.

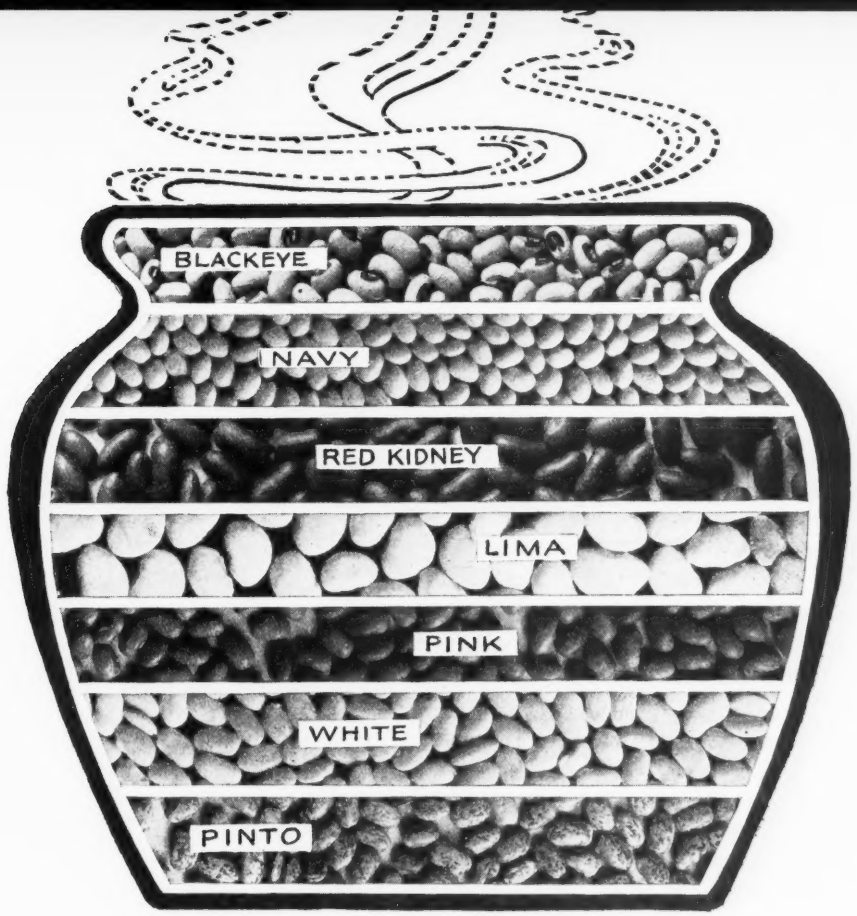
After You Buy

MISTAKES can prove good guides for the future, but only if you know when you have made them. One home check is to mark the date of purchase on tapes attached to each sheet, towel, and pillowcase, then use them in strict rotation with the others in their class. (These tapes can serve a double use if their color tells the size of the sheet.) With all factors equal, the brands that wear out first can be crossed off your next purchasing list.

DON'T HANDICAP your linen closet. Plenty of soap but little or no bleach is one laundry rule. Piling too many on a shelf puts a strain on folds. So does ironing creases in, especially at the selvage. Textile experts say the less ironing the better, and never a hot iron. Rough spots on beds or springs wait to snag your sheets. Mattress pads save wear on both sheets and mattresses.

TWO useful bulletins by the Bureau of Home Economics for consumers who wish more detailed aid in buying cotton goods are: "Quality Guides in Buying Sheets and Pillowcases" and "Selection of Cotton Fabrics." Each is sold for 5 cents by the Superintendent of Documents, Washington.

PRESENT GUIDES FOR HOUSEHOLD BUYING, an invaluable compendium of consumer information on quality grades now in use, and on agencies engaged in defining such grades, can be bought from the Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D. C., for 5 cents. Authors of this guide book, published originally in April 1934 and revised in January 1936, are Ruth O'Brien, Chief of the Textiles and Clothing Division, and Medora M. Ward, Assistant Economist of the Economics Division, of the Bureau of Home Economics. Its 35 pages of easily read type bring together definitions of currently used grades for food products, food containers, clothing and textiles, household equipment and furnishings, dry cleaning and laundering, and such miscellaneous products as: Cement, coal, drugs, funeral merchandise, fur, gold articles, leather, lumber, oil, paint, and watchcases. Among the agencies engaged in drawing up standards, specifications, and trade practices described, are: The United States Department of Agriculture, the Federal Trade Commission, the National Bureau of Standards, the American Standards Association, the American Society for Testing Materials, Underwriters' Laboratories, the American Gas Association, the American Medical Association, and the New England Council.



When nutritionists plan low-cost diets, they always put in plenty of beans. No other vegetable is rich in so many different food values as beans and peas. With supplies much bigger than usual this year, prices should be very reasonable.

Dried Beans for Economy

HUMBLE possessor of more food virtues than any other vegetable, the lowly dried bean rolls out on 1935-36's food stage in quantities a fifth greater than last year, to make its bid for consumer favor.

TO consumers in pursuit of variety on meatless days, this is front-page news, for the high carbohydrate and protein content of beans makes them a good energy and body-building food. They count, too, as a good source of iron, calcium, and Vitamin B. While their protein is not "complete" enough to depend on without other proteins—such as in meat, milk, and eggs—beans have more of this nutrient than any other vegetable. Cheapest of all vegetables all the year, this year, with such abundant supplies, they should be especially cheap.

WHEN money is scarce, therefore, nutritionists say "look to your beans." The imaginative cook knows how to translate them into mouth-watering baked beans, into the good old-fashioned bean soup, into Hopping John, chile con carne y frijoles, bean salads and sandwiches. If she doesn't, she can find out from the Bureau of Home Economics which has prepared recipes for each. Two basic rules only she must observe if she is to use beans economically: Cook them a long time; keep left-overs cool and use them soon or they will spoil.

HOW many of the many varieties of beans we can buy were brought to our shores by sailors, nobody knows. But certainly many of them came from abroad—from Chile and the Orient, from Mexico and Western Asia, from

Brazil and France--and many a sailor has breakfasted, lunched, and dined on them. Easy to preserve, easy to store, big value for little money tucked into small space, beans have long been standard fare for those who embark on long and strenuous expeditions.

BEST known of all the varieties is the pea, or navy, bean. Michigan leads in its production, and in 1935 provided some four and a half million bags, each bag holding 100 pounds. Most epicures of Boston baked beans look for a species of pea bean for their prized dish, and some of them swear only by the yellow-eyed species. Michigan supplies most of the raw material for canned pork and beans, too. Pea beans are white and small, the smallest of the more commonly used varieties.

ANOTHER important center of production of pea beans is western New York State, whose crop of these, kidney beans, and a few other varieties in 1935 ran about one million bags.

CLOSE relative, in appearance, to the pea bean is the "Great Northern" or white bean, which comes from Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, and Nebraska. Not good for canning, because they mush too much, these white beans are excellent for home consumption. Supplies in 1935 came to around one and a half million bags. Each white bean looks about twice the size of the little pea bean, but is somewhat flatter.

LIMAS, even if "babies", come larger than any of the other white beans. One of the earliest records of their appearance in this country is by way of one Captain John Harris, U. S. N., who secured the seed in Lima, Peru, in 1824 and brought it back to this country to grow on his farm in New York. Later limas were cultivated generally in eastern States. Now California is the most important single producer. Limas sometimes go by the name "butter beans."

PANSY-FACED, with its dainty oval of black around the eye, or germ, of the bean, the blackeye bean (or cowpea) has a distinctive appearance easy to remember. California produces about 95 percent of commercial production of the blackeyes in this country. Most important consumers of these beans, which came to us from the Orient, are the Negroes.

PINTO beans add still more of a decorative touch to the bean family. They are of a pinkish cream color, mottled with brown. Colorado and New Mexico are major producers of this bean which is especially prized by the Mexican population as well as by other southern consumers. It is only occasionally found in northern shops. Bean production in the pinto area in 1935 was approximately two million bags.

DELICATELY tinted, "pinks" are honestly named. They are small, bigger than pea beans but sometimes not quite as large as white beans. Mexican people in the Southwest prefer them to the white varieties. Some canners have been known to use pinks as substitutes for the red kidney bean in making chili con carne. California is the major producer in this country of this variety which came originally from South America and Mexico.

MAHOGANY colored kidney beans, bigger than pinks, are quickly spotted by most consumers. They are a product particularly of western New York State, though grown in other areas, and are especially popular in New England regions.

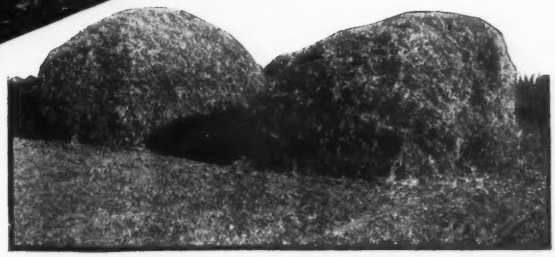
MANY other variations of this important seed--each with its distinctive coloring and shape--are grown in different sections of the country. These seven--pea, white, lima, blackeye, pinto, pink, and kidney beans--head the list in quantity of production.

THIRTY thousand farmers produce most of the beans commercially sold. For about two-thirds of this number, beans are the farmer's main source of income. In May the northern farmer will plant his beans, by machine, down long straight rows, two and a half feet apart. Three or four times during the season he will cultivate the field. From late August until sometime in October is harvest time. With a sled machine, which has knives on each side to cut under the surface soil, he will drive down the rows. If he can, he will do the cutting in the early morning or in the evening when the plants are damp so that the beans will not shell out of their pods. Ordinarily the plants are hand-bunched, and left piled up in shocks or stacks to dry. When dry they are hauled from the field to a thresher which knocks the beans

from the pod. Cast-off pods and straw are used for feed.

AFTER threshing, beans must be cleaned and recleaned to make them ready for market. This is usually done by commission men and dealers at central shipping points. There the beans are usually run through a series of machines. First they are thoroughly screened to remove stones, broken beans, bits of stem and pods and other matter. In some areas beans are hand-picked in addition. This is a more common practice in New York, Michigan, and in the Great Northern area. There may be a second screening by machine in other areas to make sure that all foreign matter is removed. Finishing off is done by polishing the beans. Some develop a high polish, some a dull one, depending on the conditions under which the beans were grown and harvested.

Planting is done by machines like the top one.. To harvest beans, farmers use a kind of sled machine with knives on each side which cut under the surface soil..... The beans are then left in shocks or stacks to dry before being thrashed.



CONSUMERS cannot buy dried beans by quality grades, but practically all of them are bought by dealers on Federal Government standards or other comparable standards. Government grades are U. S. No. 1, into which class about 80 percent of the beans fall; U. S. No. 2, which covers about 15 percent; U. S. No. 3, and Unclassified, accounting for the remaining 5 percent. Unclassified grade beans may be used for feed and never reach the retail market. Canners usually will buy only beans of the top grade, and in some instances they demand only the hand-picked product.

TENTATIVE consumer standards for canned dry beans—with or without tomato sauce, with or without pork—have been worked up by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics of the U. S. Department of Agriculture. It now remains for consumers to demand the inclusion of the proper grade legends on labels. Insist on buying canned pork and beans and other canned fruits and vegetables bearing truthful statements of grade.

TOP year for bean farmers came in 1929 when the total farm value reached $79,000,000, for 12,240,000 hundred-pound bags. The price per bag, $6.77, was 50 cents less than 1928's all-record price, but because 1929's crop was larger and consumers' pocketbooks were still bulgy, total returns were more than $10,000,000 greater.

SINCE 1929, the farm price per bag of beans has touched lows not before recorded. By 1932, it had reached $1.63 as against 1928's price of $7.27, and bean farmers took in a total of only $17,000,000. In 1933 the farm price had picked up to $2.71, still lower than any predepression figure. Total returns came to $33,383,000. In 1934 the average farm price had reached $3.46 and total farm value $35,159,000.

NOT once since 1928 has the production of beans amounted to less than 10 million bags.

[Concluded on page 17]

Bureau of Home Economics technician using a thread-counting machine on different kinds of fabrics.

Consumer-Farmer Briefs from Washington

SINCE one large grocery distribution organization with outlets all over the country began in December 1934 using U. S. Government standards for their canned fruits and vegetables and labeling their products "A", "B", and "C", it has put on the market or is in process of marketing 68 million grade "C" cans, 17½ million grade "A", and 3 million grade "B." Starting gradually, with a few products, the company is now putting grade labels on many fruits and vegetables for which grades have been developed. As supplies of old-style labels are exhausted, the new labels on a number of additional commodities will bear grade legends.

SO FAR, there are Government standards for 4 canned fruits—applesauce, grapefruit, peaches, and red sour pitted cherries. Canned vegetables for which there are Government standards include: dry beans (with or without tomato sauce, with or without pork); lima beans, snap beans, beets, carrots, cream style corn, whole grain corn, mushrooms, peas, pumpkin, sauerkraut, spinach, succotash, tomatoes, tomato catsup, tomato juice, tomato pulp.

NEXT time you doubt whether you are getting the quality you are paying for in these canned foods, look around for the graded kind. You find them on sale by many retailers these days. More canners are using them. Still more will adopt the practice when consumers buy by quality rather than by price.

AAA

ANOTHER consumer protection is recommended by the Federal Trade Commission. In its annual report to Congress, it proposes that the Act creating the Commission be amended to give it clear jurisdiction over a "practice which is unfair or deceptive to the public, but may not necessarily be unfair to a competitor." Hitherto, the Commission has had to stick to trade practices which hurt other companies doing the same business, and could not prosecute if only consumers had to pay the bill. An example of such a practice is the labeling of a product A-1, when Federal Grades include only A, B, and C, so that legally A-1 may mean anything, even substandard goods.

AAA

SOME Canadian farmers learned that when they marketed their produce cooperatively, they could get twice the price they could get by selling to distributors. Goods were cheaper when bought cooperatively, was the thrifty experience of their buying associations. These discoveries came as a result of what St. Francis Xavier University in Antigonish, Nova Scotia, did. This University decided to train its

students in cooperation so that they could not only do useful work when graduated but would help lift the community, as large as Massachusetts, out of its economic stagnation. In 1929, the University organized 10 thousand adults into study groups. Ten thousand miners, farmers, and fishermen mastered the principles of cooperation and applied them in forming buying associations in their own communities. Now 25 of these associations have evolved into consumer-owned stores. They hope to begin producing their own goods in the future. Forty-five credit unions exist to furnish funds when needed and more are being formed. Already they have amassed a capital of $90,000 in a community recently poverty-stricken. Twenty-five lobster factories, processing plants, and lumber mills keep busy the erstwhile unemployed.

GOOD business, these dynamic study groups, say the Nova Scotians, 25,000 of whom now attend the University's extension courses. Dr. Coady, Director of the Extension Division explains, "It is not a question of cooperation or something else; cooperative action has become the only way. Economic self-help through cooperatives will make the people competent to enjoy economic democracy when we create it. If they are not able to carry on these economic functions for themselves, they are not able to become a great people."

AAA

FIVE meals a day for maximum efficiency, recommend Drs. Haggard and Greenberg of Yale's Department of Applied Physiology in a study summarized in the Monthly Labor Review. Heavy meals burden digestion and cause a feeling of lassitude, but small, frequent meals keep up energy.

FACTORY workers who sewed together the canvas tops of tennis shoes produced almost 10 percent more when they ate 5 meals a day than when they ate the customary 3, in an experiment conducted by the authors. Studies of large groups of subjects indicated that energy was low before breakfast and highest half an hour after breakfast. When people eat only 2 meals a day, their muscular efficiency is above before-breakfast level for about 2 hours of the working day. When they eat 3 meals, efficiency is high for 4 hours a day, and when they eat 5 meals it is high for 7 hours. The authors conclude that "the practice common in this country of eating the day's supply of food in three installments does not permit the greatest efficiency, vigor, and freedom from distraction of which the individual is capable."

A WORD of caution about extra meals. Don't go too hard on starches and sugars. Soup, stew, or salad for the snacks will help to keep the diet in balance.

DRIED BEANS FOR ECONOMY

[Concluded from page 15]

In only 2 of the 10 years preceding 1929 was there a 10-million-bag crop. Yet prices which farmers could earn for these bountiful crops in depression and recovery years have been a fraction of those they received in predepression years. In 1935, with a bigger crop than any since 1930—experts expected it to total 13 million bags—the estimated farm price did not even touch its 1934 level.

RECORD of prices consumers pay for dried beans during the past 2 years has included limas, blackeyed peas (or beans), and navy beans. Previous to that, prices on navy beans only were recorded. Trend of average retail prices of navy beans follows the route of the average farm price for all dried beans. 1929 was the peak year when a pound of navy beans cost consumers an average of 14 cents. Lowest prices came in 1932 when the average had dropped to 5.1 cents. In 1935 navy beans sold around 6 cents a pound, blackeyes at a little over 8 cents, and limas for about 10 cents.

ONE boost for bean farmers came in 1933 when the Federal Surplus Relief Corporation purchased 5 million pounds to distribute to families on relief. Again in 1934 a purchase was made, this time of 1,875,000 pounds which were sent to relief families in Puerto Rico. These purchases served the double purpose of helping to increase farm prices and of providing a nourishing food for families unable to buy beans at any price. Under the AAA there has been no production control or marketing-agreement program for bean farmers. Marketing agreements were proposed in 1934, but when drought cut down supplies of some types of beans, the proposals were abandoned.

LATEST REPORTS from the Bureau of Labor Statistics when this issue of the GUIDE was prepared were those of January 14. They show a drop of close to 1 percent in the cost of food during the first 2 weeks of 1936. Most important decreases occurred in wheat and hog products as a result of the elimination of the processing taxes.

DURING the time the wheat tax was in effect it was passed on to the consumer in the form of higher prices of flour and wheat cereals. Almost immediately after all processing taxes were invalidated on January 6, wholesale prices of flour were reduced. Bread price reductions in 11 large cities had been noted in the trade press by January 31. If there is no change in the policy of the millers until legislation is actually passed, substantially lower prices of flour and of wheat cereal products to consumers should be more general. The wheat processing tax represented half a cent in the price of the average pound loaf of bread and 0.7 cent in a pound of wheat flour.

THE SITUATION concerning the hog tax is more complex. Probably the tax itself did not have much effect on prices consumers paid for hog products. When considered by itself, this tax had more of a tendency to lower the prices paid to farmers for hogs. For that reason discontinuing the hog tax might be expected to increase the wholesale price of hogs without changing very much the price of hog products to consumers. Wholesale hog prices did increase, although between January 6 and 31 the increase was less than one-fourth the amount of the tax, but the wholesale price of fresh pork products dropped at the same time. In this period the total amount given back by the packers to farmers and consumers (assuming that reductions in wholesale prices of fresh pork carry through to consumers) was $1.72 as compared with the $2.25 gain to the packer. The addition of 53 cents to the packers' margin raised it up to past levels. Hog prices would probably have increased more than they did except for the fact that the higher prices brought increased shipments to the market. Daily receipts of hogs at

CHANGES IN AVERAGE RETAIL PRICES IN THE UNITED STATES

Kind of food	Dec. 31 1935	Jan. 14 1936	Change in two weeks
Dairy products:	¢	¢	%
Milk, qt.	11.6	11.8*	+1.7
Cheese, lb.	27.7	27.8	+0.4
Butter, lb.	40.6	40.9	+0.7
Beef:			
Round steak, lb.	34.9	34.9	——
Rib roast, lb.	30.9	30.9	——
Chuck roast, lb.	23.9	24.6	+2.9
Pork:			
Chops, lb.	35.0	32.3	-7.7
Lard, lb.	18.9	17.9	-5.3
Whole smoked ham, lb.	33.5	33.2	-0.9
Lamb:			
Leg of lamb, lb.	29.0	29.0	——
Breast lamb, lb.	13.5	13.8	+2.2
Square chuck, lb.	23.0	22.5	-2.2
Poultry and eggs:			
Hens, lb.	32.1	32.3	+0.6
Eggs, doz.	40.2	38.4	-4.5
Bread:			
White, lb.	8.6	8.5	-1.2
Rye, lb.	9.2	9.2	——
Whole wheat, lb.	9.5	9.5	——

*3.5-5.0 percent butterfat (continued)

Your Food

Chicago in the 3 weeks following the Supreme Court decision averaged more than 50 percent more than during the 4 weeks preceding January 6. Consequently, some drop in prices of pork and other hog products is likely. This increase in shipments will probably be of a temporary nature.

THERE has been so much discussion of the processing taxes some city consumers seem to think they are responsible for most or all the increases in food prices which have occurred during the past 2 years. This is far from being true. The elimination of the processing tax

CHANGES IN AVERAGE RETAIL PRICES IN THE UNITED STATES

Kind of food	Dec. 31 1935	Jan. 14 1936	Change in two weeks
Cereal products:	¢	¢	%
Flour, 1b	5.4	4.9	-9.3
Macaroni, 1b	15.3	15.3	.....
Wheat cereal (28-oz. package)	24.1	23.9	-0.8
Vegetables - canned:			
Corn, #2 can	11.5	11.4	-0.9
Peas, #2 can	16.2	16.2	.....
Tomatoes, #2 can	9.3	9.3	.....
Vegetables - fresh:			
Potatoes, 1b	2.3	2.3	.....
Onions, 1b	4.2	4.3	+2.4
Cabbage, 1b	3.6	3.9	+8.3
Vegetables - fresh:			
Lettuce, head	8.0	7.2	-10.0
Spinach, 1b	8.7	8.1	-6.9
Carrots, bunch	6.1	6.1	.....
Fruit - canned:			
Peaches, #2½ can	19.1	19.0	-0.5
Pears, #2½ can	22.6	22.5	-0.4
Pineapple, #2½ can	22.6	22.5	-0.4
Fruit - fresh:			
Apples, 1b	5.5	5.4	-1.8
Bananas, 1b	6.4	6.6	+3.1
Oranges, doz	30.9	30.3	-1.9

Bill

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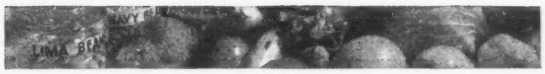
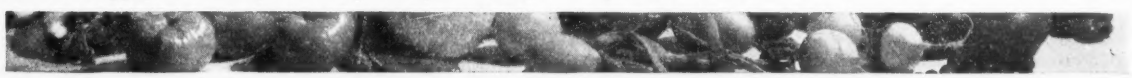
will not restore the extremely low food prices which existed in 1932 and early 1933. There have been many factors in the situation which have tended to raise prices of food and other farm products. First, there was the devaluation of the dollar which had a decided effect on prices of wheat, cotton, and some other international products. Then there was an improvement in business conditions generally which brought with it increased purchasing power of consumers and strengthened the demand for food and other farm products. In 1934 there was one of the worst droughts on record and this greatly reduced supplies of many of the principal foods,



far more in fact than was contemplated by the AAA programs. The AAA adjustment programs called for smaller acreages of certain crops in order to eliminate surpluses and to restore a more favorable balance between production and consumption. It is a combination of these factors that was responsible for most of the increase in food prices during the past 2 years. The processing taxes themselves while adding materially to farm income through the benefits they made possible, had only a minor effect on retail food prices and if the AAA program could have been financed from some other source, a substantial rise in consumer food prices would have taken place as a result of adjustment of supplies and the other events mentioned.

BECAUSE of this there is no reason to expect any sharp drop in the general level of food prices following the elimination of the processing taxes. Under the conditions stated above there should be a fairly substantial drop in retail prices of cereal products and probably a moderate drop in prices of pork and other hog products. Except for these changes the level of food prices is not likely to be affected very much during the next few months by the Supreme Court decision.

CERTAIN drops in food prices which consumers can expect in the coming months will have nothing to do with the discontinuance of production control programs or the taxes. They would have taken place had these programs been continued. Pork prices will probably show a slight falling off in the early summer and a more pronounced drop in the late summer. The AAA corn and hog program for 1936 provided for an increased production over 1935. Better cuts of beef may possibly join in this downward movement. Egg prices will likely follow their usual seasonal drop from now until May. As supplies of various fresh fruits and vegetables increase with the warmer weather, prices will fall away. The May 20 and July 8, 1935, issues of the GUIDE include seasonal calendars of the movements of the more important of these foods. Butter is usually cheaper in June. Bread prices, if they follow the movement of wheat prices, should ease up next summer.



Dairy Products

DAIRY PRODUCT prices went up rather substantially in the first half of January. Fluid milk prices rose an average of 0.2 cent a quart, cheese 0.1 cent a pound, and butter 0.3 cent a pound.

WHOLESALE butter prices reached a peak about the first week in January after a long climb throughout the fall and early winter months. There was a drop of about 2 cents a pound in the wholesale price of butter from the week ending January 4 to the week ending January 18. The following week butter prices strengthened again and regained about half of the previous loss.

MILK PRODUCTION per cow on January 1 averaged 11.27 pounds which was substantially higher than the production per cow on January 1, 1935, and approximately the same as on January 1, 1934. In all 3 years, however, production per cow was considerably below the previous 5-year average.

REPORTS from dairy sections indicate that herds are being closely culled and it is probable that the average proportion of heifers and heifer calves is lower than usual. This is due to the high price of veal as well as to last year's reduction in cow numbers as a result of the feed shortage and to the fact that many other classes of livestock are now more profitable than dairy cows. This last factor has been very important in holding down the supply of milk and milk products during the past few months. Although feed is much more plentiful than last year and there are fewer cows, feed in many sections is being fed to meat animals. This situation tends to reduce current milk production and to strengthen the price of dairy products.

BUTTER PRICES have now risen to a point where dairymen are again feeding the usual quantity of grain per head and it appears that in some of the more important dairy sections farmers are beginning to save more heifer calves.

Average Retail Prices, January 14, 1936 (cents)

Markets	Milk (qt.)	Butter-fat content of milk	Cheese (lb.)	Butter (lb.)
United States	11.8	3.5-5.1	27.8	40.9
New England:				
Boston	11.7	3.7-4.0	26.6	41.2
Bridgeport	13.0	3.9-4.0	29.4	41.4
Fall River	13.0	3.8	27.2	38.6
Manchester	12.0	3.8-4.0	27.7	41.5
New Haven	13.0	3.7-4.0	28.4	40.8
Portland, Maine	12.0	4.0-4.3	27.4	40.7
Providence	13.0	3.7-3.8	26.9	39.0
Middle Atlantic:				
Binghamton	———	———	30.1	40.2
Buffalo	12.0	3.6-3.7	27.1	39.3
Newark	13.0	3.5	27.3	42.1
New York	13.0	3.5-3.7	29.1	41.7
Philadelphia	11.0	3.5-3.8	29.9	42.2
Pittsburgh	11.0	3.6-3.8	28.8	41.6
Rochester	12.0	3.8	28.7	38.8
Scranton	11.0	3.8	28.0	39.8
East North-Central:				
Chicago	11.0	3.5-3.8	29.6	40.9
Cincinnati	12.0	3.5-3.8	27.5	40.6
Cleveland	10.0	3.5	28.5	39.9
Columbus	10.0	4.0	28.1	39.7
Detroit	12.0	3.6-3.7	27.2	40.4
Indianapolis	11.0	3.8-3.9	26.3	40.7
Milwaukee	10.0	3.6-3.7	28.1	38.9
Peoria	11.0	3.8-4.0	26.5	40.3
Springfield, Ill.	11.1	4.0	26.5	39.9
West North-Central:				
Cedar Rapids	10.0	4.0	25.5	37.3
Kansas City	11.1	3.8-4.0	27.8	39.0
Minneapolis	10.0	3.5-3.7	26.7	39.0
Omaha	10.0	3.8-3.9	26.8	38.1
St. Louis	12.1	3.7-3.8	26.9	41.8
St. Paul	10.0	3.6-3.7	26.7	38.8
Sioux Falls	10.0	4.0-4.1	28.2	36.0
Wichita	10.0	———	24.7	36.8
South Atlantic:				
Atlanta	14.0	4.2-4.4	23.8	41.3
Baltimore	12.0	4.0-4.2	26.0	42.1
Charleston, S. C.	15.0	4.0-4.3	25.2	40.8
Columbia, S. C.	15.0	4.3	24.6	42.0
Jacksonville	15.0	4.0-5.0	24.3	41.4
Norfolk	14.0	3.8-3.9	23.8	40.9
Richmond	12.0	3.5-5.1	24.5	40.2
Savannah	14.0	4.0-4.6	24.5	40.9
Washington, D. C.	13.0	4.1	26.9	42.4
Winston-Salem	14.3	4.3	27.2	44.3
East South-Central:				
Birmingham	13.5	4.3-4.5	22.6	42.2
Jackson, Miss.	10.0	———	24.5	40.5
Knoxville	12.0	4.0-4.2	30.2	39.2
Louisville	12.4	4.0	26.4	40.9
Memphis	10.5	3.5-4.2	25.0	39.2
Mobile	14.0	4.0-5.2	25.3	39.1
West South-Central:				
Dallas	11.0	4.4	29.1	39.1
El Paso	11.0	———	26.9	39.9
Houston	12.0	4.3-4.7	24.0	40.4
Little Rock	12.0	3.8-4.5	25.2	38.4
New Orleans	12.0	4.0-4.5	25.9	40.8
Oklahoma City	———	———	———	———
Mountain:				
Albuquerque	12.0	4.0-4.1	29.9	39.7
Butte	10.0	3.5-3.7	25.8	38.8
Denver	10.5	3.7	28.6	41.0
Salt Lake City	11.0	3.8	24.8	42.1
Tucson	12.3	———	24.9	40.2
Pacific:				
Los Angeles	11.0	4.0	26.9	40.2
Portland, Oreg.	10.5	4.0	26.1	39.4
San Francisco	13.0	4.0-4.2	29.4	41.9
Seattle	9.1	4.0	24.7	41.0
Spokane	10.0	4.0-4.2	26.0	38.8

Average Retail Prices, January 14, 1936 (cents)

Markets	White (1b.)	Rye (1b.)	Whole-wheat (1b.)
United States	8.5	9.2	9.5
New England:			
Boston	8.3	9.2	8.8
Bridgeport	9.3	10.0	9.8
Fall River	7.8	8.4	9.0
Manchester	8.5	9.0	8.6
New Haven	9.2	9.7	9.9
Portland, Maine	9.1	9.5	9.3
Providence	8.2	8.8	9.4
Middle Atlantic:			
Binghamton	—	—	—
Buffalo	8.6	8.8	9.8
Newark	9.2	9.5	9.7
New York	8.9	9.1	9.6
Philadelphia	9.4	9.9	10.7
Pittsburgh	8.9	10.6	10.7
Rochester	8.5	8.4	9.3
Scranton	9.6	9.6	9.4
East North-Central:			
Chicago	7.3	8.2	9.2
Cincinnati	7.9	9.4	9.6
Cleveland	7.8	8.3	8.7
Columbus	8.2	9.1	9.3
Detroit	7.5	7.8	8.2
Indianapolis	8.0	7.9	9.3
Milwaukee	7.8	7.9	9.8
Peoria	8.2	9.1	9.3
Springfield, Ill	8.8	9.6	9.6
West North-Central:			
Cedar Rapids	8.6	9.3	8.9
Kansas City	8.9	9.4	9.4
Minneapolis	8.3	8.9	9.3
Omaha	8.6	9.1	8.7
St. Louis	8.8	9.2	9.6
St. Paul	8.4	9.0	9.3
Sioux Falls	7.7	10.0	7.8
Wichita	7.6	8.0	9.3
South Atlantic:			
Atlanta	9.0	9.4	9.0
Baltimore	9.0	9.7	9.6
Charleston, S. C	9.3	9.8	10.0
Columbia, S. C	9.7	9.6	9.8
Jacksonville	9.7	10.1	10.0
Norfolk	8.9	9.4	9.2
Richmond	8.7	8.9	9.4
Savannah	9.6	10.0	10.5
Washington, D. C	9.1	9.6	9.9
Winston-Salem	10.9	11.7	11.1
East South-Central:			
Birmingham	9.8	10.0	10.0
Jackson, Miss	9.2	9.3	9.4
Knoxville	9.0	10.1	10.7
Louisville	7.8	8.3	8.8
Memphis	8.9	9.5	9.6
Mobile	9.3	10.0	10.0
West South-Central:			
Dallas	8.8	9.0	8.6
El Paso	8.8	9.9	9.7
Houston	7.4	8.5	8.6
Little Rock	9.8	9.8	9.9
New Orleans	8.1	8.7	9.7
Oklahoma City	—	—	—
Mountain:			
Albuquerque	10.3	—	11.0
Butte	9.7	9.7	9.8
Denver	7.9	9.7	8.4
Salt Lake City	7.0	9.4	6.8
Tucson	9.8	11.2	10.0
Pacific:			
Los Angeles	7.6	9.3	8.1
Portland, Oreg	9.1	10.0	9.2
San Francisco	9.3	9.0	8.9
Seattle	9.1	9.9	9.0
Spokane	9.2	10.0	9.4

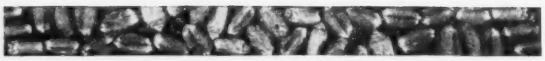
Bread

JANUARY 14's report shows a drop in the average price of white bread from 8.6 cents to 8.5 cents a pound. This drop is probably due mainly to the elimination of the processing tax on wheat which amounted to about one-half cent on a pound loaf of bread.

IT IS pretty well agreed that approximately all of the wheat processing tax was passed on to the consumer in the form of higher prices of flour and other wheat products. Elimination of the processing tax resulted in the immediate drop in the wholesale price of flour. In fact on January 14 the average wholesale price of a barrel of flour had dropped back to its level of last spring and summer. The cost of lard on January 14 also was lower than at any time during the previous year.

INCREASES in these two ingredient costs last fall were used by bakers as a justification for increasing the price of bread in a number of cities. Decreases in these ingredient costs should justify consumers in expecting a return at least to the level of bread prices of last spring and summer. If flour costs continue to drop, still further reduction should be made in bread prices. It remains to be seen whether bakers are as quick in readjusting their prices downward as they were in upping their prices.

SO FAR the drop in flour prices has been only partially reflected in the slight reduction in bread prices from December 31 to January 14. Of the 61 cities reporting bread prices both on December 31 and on January 14, 19 of them or almost a third reported decreases, on the other hand 8 of these cities reported increases. The only substantial increase was 0.5 cent a pound in El Paso. Most of the decreases in prices were also very small, 14 of the 19 cities reporting decreases indicated drops of only 0.1 cent a pound while drops of 0.2 cent were reported in 4 cities and a decrease of 0.4 cent a pound was reported in Buffalo.



Cereal Products

PRICES of cereal products started to fall off immediately after the elimination of the wheat processing tax. The quickest and most substantial decrease was in the price of flour. The cut in wholesale flour prices was followed by an immediate drop in retail flour prices. Flour decreased from an average of 5.4 cents a pound on December 31 to 4.9 cents a pound on January 14. This is a drop of 0.5 cent a pound or a little over 9 percent. The wheat processing tax amounted to about 0.7 cent on a pound of flour. Later reports on retail prices may show some further decline in flour prices.

RETAIL PRICES of wheat cereal, macaroni, and other highly processed cereal products did not change so quickly nor so much. Macaroni prices remained at 15.3 cents a pound while prices of wheat cereal were reported 0.2 cent a package lower. Consumers should expect during the next few months lower prices for all kinds of wheat products.

WHOLESALE PRICE of wheat was practically unaffected by the elimination of the processing tax. Wheat prices at the farm rose from 90.1 cents a bushel on December 15 to 93 cents on January 15. The latter price is 84 percent of the pre-war parity level.

THE 1935-36 world wheat crop is estimated to be practically the same as that of last year. The acreage sowed to winter wheat in the United States last fall was 6.7 percent above that sown in 1934 and 5.7 percent more than the 1927-31 average. On the other hand the acreage sowed in Canada is estimated to be 25 percent less than in 1934.

Average Retail Prices, January 14, 1936 (cents)

Markets	Flour (lb.)	Macaroni (lb.)	Wheat cereal (28-oz. pkg.)
United States	4.9	15.3	23.9
New England:			
Boston	4.7	14.6	23.8
Bridgeport	5.7	16.6	25.1
Fall River	5.1	16.6	21.9
Manchester	5.5	17.4	26.0
New Haven	5.4	16.1	23.6
Portland, Maine	4.8	17.8	23.8
Providence	4.9	14.8	22.3
Middle Atlantic:			
Binghamton	5.1	18.8	28.0
Buffalo	5.2	16.9	23.6
Newark	5.0	15.3	22.9
New York	5.5	16.8	23.3
Philadelphia	5.0	15.2	24.9
Pittsburgh	4.5	15.8	23.5
Rochester	5.3	15.0	23.2
Scranton	5.1	16.9	23.8
East North-Central:			
Chicago	5.0	13.1	25.1
Cincinnati	4.7	15.2	22.7
Cleveland	4.9	15.9	22.7
Columbus	4.2	16.7	22.6
Detroit	4.9	14.4	23.6
Indianapolis	4.6	14.9	25.8
Milwaukee	4.7	13.8	24.3
Peoria	5.2	13.3	26.7
Springfield, Ill	5.4	12.4	26.9
West North-Central:			
Cedar Rapids	5.1	15.2	23.7
Kansas City	4.6	16.5	23.3
Minneapolis	5.0	13.8	22.1
Omaha	4.8	18.3	24.9
St. Louis	4.9	16.0	25.9
St. Paul	5.1	13.9	23.5
Sioux Falls	4.3	13.4	25.4
Wichita	4.2	13.0	24.6
South Atlantic:			
Atlanta	5.2	17.1	25.4
Baltimore	4.9	15.3	23.1
Charleston, S. C	5.6	15.4	24.9
Columbia, S. C	5.0	17.9	27.7
Jacksonville	5.8	14.9	26.2
Norfolk	5.2	15.6	25.2
Richmond	5.0	15.5	24.2
Savannah	5.4	16.1	25.0
Washington, D. C	5.4	15.6	23.9
Winston-Salem	4.2	18.5	29.7
East South-Central:			
Birmingham	5.0	13.1	24.9
Jackson, Miss	5.8	18.3	29.3
Knoxville	5.0	12.7	28.7
Louisville	4.7	13.4	26.0
Memphis	5.6	14.5	27.7
Mobile	4.9	17.0	25.5
West South-Central:			
Dallas	5.4	17.0	26.0
El Paso	5.6	17.7	27.4
Houston	4.7	12.9	23.0
Little Rock	4.6	15.8	30.4
New Orleans	6.2	9.7	24.3
Oklahoma City	---	---	---
Mountain:			
Albuquerque	5.3	17.1	24.5
Butte	4.5	16.5	25.3
Denver	3.9	16.6	23.8
Salt Lake City	3.6	17.5	25.4
Tucson	5.1	16.2	23.6
Pacific:			
Los Angeles	4.4	14.7	24.0
Portland, Oreg	4.8	15.5	25.2
San Francisco	4.9	15.7	23.7
Seattle	4.7	17.0	26.2
Spokane	4.0	13.3	22.5

Average Retail Prices, January 14, 1936 (cents)

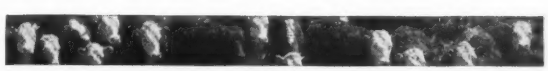
Markets	Round steak (lb.)	Rib roast (lb.)	Chuck roast (lb.)
United States	34.9	30.9	24.6
New England:			
Boston	41.7	32.8	26.8
Bridgeport	41.7	34.9	28.1
Fall River	42.9	32.3	25.4
Manchester	41.6	29.5	26.5
New Haven	44.4	34.4	28.3
Portland, Maine	37.2	31.5	22.4
Providence	41.8	35.6	27.2
Middle Atlantic:			
Binghamton	35.5	30.0	24.1
Buffalo	30.8	27.4	22.5
Newark	41.1	32.6	24.3
New York	38.7	34.9	25.0
Philadelphia	38.7	36.9	26.3
Pittsburgh	31.7	27.0	21.4
Rochester	32.0	27.0	22.7
Scranton	36.1	32.7	27.7
East North-Central:			
Chicago	34.8	32.5	25.9
Cincinnati	36.1	30.6	23.6
Cleveland	30.2	28.6	24.1
Columbus	35.5	29.8	24.4
Detroit	33.9	29.5	24.6
Indianapolis	34.0	26.7	22.7
Milwaukee	31.9	27.3	23.4
Peoria	33.1	26.5	21.4
Springfield, Ill	31.9	23.6	20.7
West North-Central:			
Cedar Rapids	25.1	18.7	17.4
Kansas City	30.1	29.2	20.5
Minneapolis	31.5	28.5	23.1
Omaha	30.4	23.9	19.8
St. Louis	35.5	27.0	22.8
St. Paul	29.9	27.1	22.5
Sioux Falls	26.9	21.7	18.4
Wichita	27.8	21.9	17.2
South Atlantic:			
Atlanta	36.8	30.6	23.4
Baltimore	31.7	28.8	21.9
Charleston, S. C	30.0	27.4	19.8
Columbia, S. C	27.1	21.1	17.3
Jacksonville	31.4	28.0	21.6
Norfolk	32.5	30.2	21.7
Richmond	33.7	29.1	22.6
Savannah	28.5	25.9	18.0
Washington, D. C	36.4	30.3	23.0
Winston-Salem	31.9	26.2	21.9
East South-Central			
Birmingham	31.4	26.6	18.0
Jackson, Miss	34.7	25.8	25.9
Knoxville	30.2	23.8	20.4
Louisville	33.7	27.2	22.2
Memphis	34.2	24.7	18.0
Mobile	29.7	22.2	16.5
West South-Central:			
Dallas	35.0	29.2	21.7
El Paso	30.5	24.2	18.2
Houston	33.4	28.1	19.7
Little Rock	31.0	26.4	18.2
New Orleans	33.2	29.8	19.3
Oklahoma City	—	—	—
Mountain:			
Albuquerque	33.6	25.8	22.1
Butte	25.6	20.5	16.6
Denver	30.4	24.8	20.3
Salt Lake City	28.6	24.3	19.6
Tucson	34.6	27.2	19.7
Pacific:			
Los Angeles	31.4	26.9	19.4
Portland, Oreg	25.1	21.4	16.9
San Francisco	31.1	27.8	18.9
Seattle	29.5	25.9	19.4
Spokane	24.8	20.3	15.6

Beef

LITTLE CHANGE in the price of most beef cuts occurred during the first half of January. Prices of some of the cheaper cuts, such as chuck and plate, continued to increase, but most other cuts stayed at about the same price levels. In comparison with prices on January 15, 1933, prices of plate which is the cheapest cut quoted had increased approximately 60 percent, while the price of sirloin steak the highest priced cut quoted had increased about 30 percent up to January 14, 1936. Plate beef on that date was 17 percent higher in cost than on January 15, 1929, while prices of other cuts of beef were all approximately 20 percent below the 1929 levels.

MOVEMENT of wholesale prices of beef steers in January was very irregular but the January average was below that of December 1935. Wholesale prices of beef carcasses continued to decline throughout December and January, dropping more than 1.5 cents a pound during the 2 months. Recent weakness in these prices together with a drop in pork prices may indicate a decrease in beef prices in the near future. However, no sharp drop in the price of beef can be expected during the next several months. Slaughter supplies may pick up some as a reflection of increased feeding, but the total slaughter is expected to be smaller than last year.

AT THE FARM, prices of beef cattle continued to rise in January. The average U. S. farm price in January was quoted at $6.22 a 100 pounds compared with $6.14 in December and $6.05 in November. A year ago on January 15, 1935, beef cattle were quoted at $5.06. The January 1936 price represented 95 percent of pre-war parity.



Pork Products

ALL HOG PRODUCTS dropped in price during the first half of January, most of the drop occurring very soon after the Supreme Court decision which invalidated the processing taxes. From December 31 to January 14 the average price of pork chops dropped 2.7 cents a pound, lard 1 cent a pound, and whole smoked ham 0.3 cent a pound. As usual the prices of fresh hog products responded more quickly to the change in the wholesale market than did the prices of cured products. Some further falling off in retail prices of hog products may occur.

IMMEDIATE effects of the removal of the hog processing tax, following the January 6 decision of the Supreme Court, were an increase in the wholesale price of live hogs and a decrease in the wholesale price of fresh pork products. Between January 6 and January 31 live hog prices went up 53 cents a hundred pounds; wholesale prices of fresh pork products dropped $1.19. The total amount given back by packers to farmers and consumers (assuming that the reduction in wholesale prices of fresh pork products carries through to consumers) was $1.72, while the total amount given to packers (due to the discontinuance of the processing tax) was $2.25. The difference between these two amounts represented an addition of 53 cents to the packers' margin, increasing it from 18 cents on January 6 to 71 cents on January 31. This margin in the past has averaged around 70 cents.

RISE in the wholesale price of live hogs might have been considerably greater than it was during the 2 weeks following the Supreme Court decision had there not been an increase of about 50 percent in the shipment of hogs to market. Supplies coming to market, of course, have a material bearing both on wholesale prices of live hogs and on consumer prices of hog products.

Average Retail Prices, January 14, 1936 (cents)

Markets	Chops (lb.)	Lard (lb.)	Whole smoked ham (lb.)
United States	32.3	17.9	33.2
New England:			
Boston	30.0	16.6	33.4
Bridgeport	33.5	17.4	33.5
Fall River	32.5	16.1	34.5
Manchester	32.2	16.4	35.5
New Haven	32.2	17.9	34.4
Portland, Maine	30.4	16.4	31.6
Providence	33.0	15.4	33.3
Middle Atlantic:			
Binghamton	35.6	17.1	31.8
Buffalo	33.9	16.4	31.9
Newark	31.8	17.4	31.9
New York	34.8	19.9	33.8
Philadelphia	33.9	17.3	32.9
Pittsburgh	32.7	18.1	33.2
Rochester	31.9	17.1	32.8
Scranton	32.3	17.9	32.2
East North-Central:			
Chicago	32.4	18.7	32.3
Cincinnati	32.5	17.7	32.1
Cleveland	29.4	19.9	33.4
Columbus	32.1	18.4	34.2
Detroit	35.6	16.8	35.5
Indianapolis	30.8	17.2	30.7
Milwaukee	30.0	16.5	32.5
Peoria	31.1	19.5	32.6
Springfield, Ill.	31.2	17.7	32.4
West North-Central:			
Cedar Rapids	28.1	16.8	28.8
Kansas City	30.7	17.3	31.4
Minneapolis	31.1	16.4	32.6
Omaha	29.4	17.3	31.4
St. Louis	30.6	16.8	33.3
St. Paul	29.5	16.4	31.3
Sioux Falls	29.7	17.6	30.5
Wichita	26.5	16.4	29.7
South Atlantic:			
Atlanta	31.5	15.9	31.3
Baltimore	31.4	16.4	33.3
Charleston, S. C.	31.8	20.8	33.5
Columbia, S. C.	29.4	20.3	30.9
Jacksonville	30.3	20.6	33.1
Norfolk	30.0	17.4	32.6
Richmond	32.3	16.0	34.4
Savannah	29.9	20.7	31.6
Washington, D. C.	33.8	15.9	33.4
Winston-Salem	31.9	20.7	32.5
East South-Central:			
Birmingham	29.1	18.6	31.6
Jackson, Miss.	31.4	19.8	34.9
Knoxville	30.0	20.6	32.0
Louisville	30.3	17.6	30.5
Memphis	29.4	16.8	30.2
Mobile	28.2	18.9	31.6
West South-Central:			
Dallas	33.6	24.2	33.2
El Paso	31.5	18.2	33.4
Houston	32.1	18.9	30.6
Little Rock	30.1	19.3	33.2
New Orleans	31.3	17.7	32.1
Oklahoma City	——	——	——
Mountain:			
Albuquerque	31.0	19.6	31.2
Butte	31.4	21.5	31.6
Denver	32.0	18.3	33.4
Salt Lake City	34.4	21.2	35.6
Tucson	35.6	20.3	36.5
Pacific:			
Los Angeles	40.1	19.3	33.6
Portland, Oreg.	33.9	20.4	34.6
San Francisco	38.0	22.0	36.2
Seattle	35.4	20.9	35.9
Spokane	29.7	20.5	35.6

Average Retail Prices, January 14, 1936 (cents)

Markets	Leg of lamb (lb.)	Breast lamb (lb.)	Lamb square chuck (lb.)
United States	29.0	13.8	22.5
New England:			
Boston	27.4	15.1	18.6
Bridgeport	29.3	11.9	22.8
Fall River	27.4	9.5	20.5
Manchester	27.9	15.8	23.0
New Haven	28.9	12.2	23.0
Portland, Maine	27.2	15.6	21.7
Providence	28.1	11.9	21.1
Middle Atlantic:			
Binghamton	30.3	12.4	25.3
Buffalo	28.5	14.6	24.6
Newark	28.6	15.9	26.0
New York	28.9	12.7	20.6
Philadelphia	30.1	11.1	21.4
Pittsburgh	30.1	15.3	23.1
Rochester	28.1	15.3	24.0
Scranton	30.5	14.3	26.1
East North-Central:			
Chicago	30.9	13.7	26.1
Cincinnati	32.9	17.8	27.4
Cleveland	30.6	15.5	26.4
Columbus	32.5	17.2	28.4
Detroit	30.5	17.1	28.2
Indianapolis	32.1	15.6	24.6
Milwaukee	30.3	13.1	24.2
Peoria	31.2	15.6	25.6
Springfield, Ill	29.8	13.6	22.7
West North-Central:			
Cedar Rapids	28.0	12.2	23.1
Kansas City	27.7	17.5	24.2
Minneapolis	28.8	12.0	23.7
Omaha	26.9	9.9	20.6
St. Louis	29.4	17.8	23.3
St. Paul	26.7	11.7	23.4
Sioux Falls	28.3	10.8	22.3
Wichita	29.7	11.7	20.2
South Atlantic:			
Atlanta	29.3	14.3	19.9
Baltimore	28.3	16.0	23.8
Charleston, S. C	29.1	15.8	22.5
Columbia, S. C	27.0	17.0	20.8
Jacksonville	29.8	14.2	21.6
Norfolk	28.6	11.9	17.6
Richmond	30.5	16.4	24.1
Savannah	29.4	14.1	21.9
Washington, D. C	28.8	13.7	23.5
Winston-Salem	32.9	14.6	23.7
East South-Central:			
Birmingham	30.9	14.7	19.2
Jackson, Miss	31.5	19.0	18.9
Knoxville	29.2	15.0	23.0
Louisville	33.0	20.1	27.1
Memphis	29.9	16.1	21.8
Mobile	32.3	14.3	20.3
West South-Central:			
Dallas	28.8	14.1	18.8
El Paso	28.1	13.9	20.6
Houston	29.6	12.5	18.1
Little Rock	28.5	15.5	21.4
New Orleans	29.5	14.4	17.8
Oklahoma City	———	———	———
Mountain:			
Albuquerque	28.8	14.4	24.3
Butte	28.0	11.8	22.4
Denver	25.5	13.6	20.7
Salt Lake City	28.4	12.1	22.0
Tucson	29.0	14.0	20.2
Pacific:			
Los Angeles	27.6	12.4	22.1
Portland, Oreg	26.1	13.2	21.1
San Francisco	30.4	11.7	20.4
Seattle	29.4	14.1	23.1
Spokane	26.4	11.2	19.8

Lamb

NO DEFINITE TREND in lamb prices appeared during the first half of January. Prices of breast of lamb went up 0.3 cent a pound, prices of chuck dropped 0.5 cent a pound, and leg of lamb remained unchanged.

SUPPLIES of sheep and lamb for slaughter continue fairly large and the recent drop in prices of pork may very likely tend to bring down prices of lambs somewhat during the next few weeks. Lambs represent one of the few farm products which are selling at higher than pre-war parity. The January 15 average farm price of lambs was $8.25 a 100 pounds.

"PARITY PRICE" or "fair exchange value" of lambs on January 15 was $7.40. If farmers had sold lambs at this price in January 1936 they could have bought with the money the same amounts of goods as they bought in the pre-war period from 1909 to 1914. The actual farm price of lambs was 111 percent of pre-war parity, so that farmers could exchange lambs for 11 percent more of goods than they could obtain in the pre-war period.

ONE important factor tending to strengthen lamb prices in recent months has been the improved demand for wool, both in this country and abroad. Wool prices have been advancing and the consumption of wool is exceptionally large both in the United States and in the United Kingdom. Stocks of wool at the end of 1935 in the United States were the lowest in several years.

Poultry and Eggs

HENS went up 0.2 cent a pound in the first half of January while egg prices dropped 1.8 cents a dozen. Both changes were in line with the usual movement of prices at this time of the year.

QUOTATIONS in the wholesale market indicate that egg prices continued to drop through most of January although there was a slight increase in quotations in New York City during the last week of the month.

RECEIPTS of eggs were heavy in December and early January. It seems likely that egg prices in the first quarter of 1936 will be lower than they were in the same months of 1935. Market receipts of poultry on the other hand have been relatively short, the December receipts being the lightest for the month in many years. Small receipts of poultry together with the small supplies of other meats have tended to push up poultry prices. Probabilities are that prices of poultry will continue near their present level for several months.

STORAGE HOLDINGS of frozen poultry on January 1 were substantially below last year's holdings and below the 5-year average.

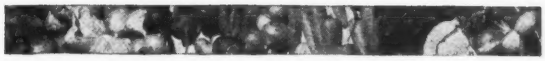
THE FARM PRICE of eggs on January 15, 1936, averaged 22.8 cents a dozen compared with 25 cents for January 1935. Prices of chickens on January 15, 1936, on the other hand, were higher than for the previous year, averaging 16.5 cents a pound as compared with 12.4 cents a year earlier. The January 1936 farm price of eggs was 67 percent of pre-war parity while the price of chickens was 103 percent of pre-war parity. In terms of parity, prices of chickens and of retail milk were the highest in January 1936, each being 15 percent higher than parity.

Average Retail Prices, January 14, 1936 (cents)

Markets	Hens (lb.)	Eggs (doz.)
United States	32.3	38.4
New England:		
Boston	32.0	42.1
Bridgeport	33.2	47.1
Fall River	29.7	42.3
Manchester	33.1	37.0
New Haven	33.4	42.9
Portland, Maine	32.9	38.1
Providence	32.1	41.1
Middle Atlantic:		
Binghamton	32.1	39.4
Buffalo	33.0	39.0
Newark	32.5	43.9
New York	33.6	45.4
Philadelphia	33.7	41.1
Pittsburgh	31.1	40.1
Rochester	31.4	39.1
Scranton	33.8	40.2
East North-Central:		
Chicago	33.0	35.7
Cincinnati	34.3	37.4
Cleveland	35.2	36.4
Columbus	31.0	36.3
Detroit	34.1	34.4
Indianapolis	29.3	34.8
Milwaukee	28.2	29.5
Peoria	31.5	34.7
Springfield, Ill	28.9	33.6
West North-Central:		
Cedar Rapids	25.9	26.5
Kansas City	29.0	31.7
Minneapolis	31.7	30.3
Omaha	28.0	27.6
St. Louis	30.5	33.2
St. Paul	30.8	30.4
Sioux Falls	26.3	24.1
Wichita	28.5	25.4
South Atlantic:		
Atlanta	27.0	39.4
Baltimore	33.4	38.3
Charleston, S. C	27.2	39.7
Columbia, S. C	22.0	41.9
Jacksonville	29.5	43.6
Norfolk	30.2	40.0
Richmond	31.2	39.2
Savannah	26.0	32.4
Washington, D. C	34.4	42.8
Winston-Salem	28.2	38.1
East South Central:		
Birmingham	23.3	32.3
Jackson, Miss	25.0	30.1
Knoxville	25.1	37.0
Louisville	30.7	34.6
Memphis	27.9	29.2
Mobile	24.2	31.4
West South-Central:		
Dallas	28.3	33.5
El Paso	28.8	40.9
Houston	31.1	32.6
Little Rock	24.7	30.4
New Orleans	28.3	30.7
Oklahoma City	—	—
Mountain:		
Albuquerque	27.0	46.2
Butte	26.9	33.9
Denver	30.0	34.1
Salt Lake City	29.6	33.5
Tucson	31.8	38.3
Pacific:		
Los Angeles	35.2	29.4
Portland, Oreg	28.3	26.3
San Francisco	35.6	29.5
Seattle	30.3	30.8
Spokane	26.6	28.2

Average Retail Prices, January 14, 1936 (cents)

Markets	Potatoes (lb.)	Onions (lb.)	Cabbage (lb.)
United States	2.3	4.3	3.9
New England:			
Boston	2.4	4.3	4.3
Bridgeport	2.3	4.4	5.0
Fall River	2.1	4.3	3.1
Manchester	2.3	4.8	3.0
New Haven	2.3	4.4	3.2
Portland, Maine	1.9	4.8	3.1
Providence	2.1	4.0	3.1
Middle Atlantic:			
Binghamton	1.9	4.6	2.6
Buffalo	1.9	4.1	2.3
Newark	2.7	4.6	3.7
New York	2.8	4.7	5.1
Philadelphia	2.6	4.5	3.0
Pittsburgh	2.2	4.2	3.4
Rochester	1.8	3.6	2.1
Scranton	2.2	3.9	3.8
East North-Central:			
Chicago	2.2	4.3	4.9
Cincinnati	2.4	4.9	3.3
Cleveland	2.1	4.1	3.5
Columbus	1.6	4.0	2.7
Detroit	1.9	3.5	3.8
Indianapolis	1.9	4.6	3.2
Milwaukee	1.7	3.6	3.2
Peoria	2.0	4.4	4.2
Springfield, Ill	2.0	4.3	3.3
West North-Central:			
Cedar Rapids	1.9	3.5	2.8
Kansas City	2.2	5.0	3.3
Minneapolis	2.1	3.8	4.4
Omaha	1.9	4.8	3.8
St. Louis	2.4	4.3	4.0
St. Paul	1.9	4.0	3.3
Sioux Falls	1.9	4.4	3.4
Wichita	1.9	3.9	3.5
South Atlantic:			
Atlanta	2.6	4.6	3.8
Baltimore	2.4	4.4	4.5
Charleston, S. C	2.6	5.1	3.6
Columbia, S. C	3.2	6.4	4.0
Jacksonville	2.3	4.4	2.7
Norfolk	2.8	4.8	5.0
Richmond	2.7	4.6	4.1
Savannah	2.4	4.5	3.5
Washington, D. C	2.5	4.5	4.8
Winston-Salem	2.7	5.6	4.4
East South-Central:			
Birmingham	2.5	4.8	3.4
Jackson, Miss	2.9	5.0	3.8
Knoxville	2.5	5.2	3.5
Louisville	2.5	4.2	4.3
Memphis	2.3	4.4	3.5
Mobile	2.3	4.1	3.3
West South-Central:			
Dallas	3.3	5.2	4.1
El Paso	2.5	3.9	3.2
Houston	3.1	4.1	2.7
Little Rock	2.4	4.2	3.5
New Orleans	2.7	4.3	3.5
Oklahoma City	—	—	—
Mountain:			
Albuquerque	1.8	4.1	1.9
Butte	2.0	3.7	5.4
Denver	2.1	3.3	3.3
Salt Lake City	1.8	3.3	3.2
Tucson	2.8	3.7	2.6
Pacific:			
Los Angeles	2.7	3.8	2.8
Portland, Oreg	2.5	3.3	5.3
San Francisco	2.8	3.8	6.8
Seattle	2.7	3.6	5.5
Spokane	2.5	4.2	4.9



Vegetables (fresh)

NO CHANGE appeared in the average price of potatoes during the first 2 weeks of the year but prices of onions and cabbage each increased seasonally.

AT this time of the year the most important fact concerning the outlook for these crops is the amount of stocks in storage. Stocks of potatoes on January 1, 1936 were 30 million bushels less than on January 1, 1935, about the same as the January 1 stocks in 1934 and not far from average. Usually when we have stocks of potatoes about equal to this year's stocks there is not much change in potato prices during the late winter until supplies of new potatoes begin to come on the market in volume. This is generally in April. Some moderate seasonal increase in prices might be expected in a year like this one but any such increase is likely to be very small.

STOCKS of onions on January 1 were somewhat higher than in either of the two previous years. On the other hand shrinkage and other loss of weight seems to be heavier than usual this year. There is a great deal of variation in the keeping quality of onions from year to year. Onions need to be dry and firm to keep well in storage otherwise they get soft and a large percentage of them have to be thrown away when the stock is taken out of storage.

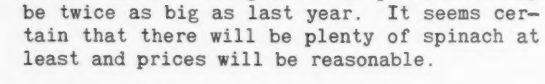
CABBAGE STOCKS are smaller this year than last but about twice as big as stocks in January 1934. Thus there should be plenty of cabbage. Also the production of spring cabbage is likely to be about 50 percent greater than the 5-year average. This is mainly a result of over planting in areas where the freeze was severe last year and where prices were high.

Vegetables (fresh)

LETTUCE dropped in price rather rapidly in the first 2 weeks of January, falling 0.8 cent a head, or 10 percent. This drop appears to have been due to increased shipments of lettuce in early January—shipments at that time were heavier than in the previous year. The total movement of lettuce to date is also ahead of the movement of the crop up to this time a year ago. A plentiful supply of winter lettuce is available, most of which is of excellent quality and growers are getting good yields in many growing sections.

PRICES of spinach also dropped during the first 2 weeks of January falling 0.6 cent a pound. A big crop of early spinach is coming on the market and it is expected the production may be twice as big as last year. It seems certain that there will be plenty of spinach at least and prices will be reasonable.

NO CHANGE was reported in the prices of carrots in the first 2 weeks of the year. It is expected that the spring crop of carrots will be somewhat above the crop of last year and also above the 5-year average. Crop conditions appear to be good, both in Arizona and Texas and increased shipments are in prospect for the next few weeks.



Average Retail Prices, January 14, 1936 (cents)

Markets	Lettuce (head)	Spinach (lb.)	Carrots (bunch)
United States	7.2	8.1	6.1
New England:			
Boston	8.6	8.4	7.0
Bridgeport	9.2	8.9	7.4
Fall River	6.8	8.5	6.1
Manchester	10.2	8.3	6.4
New Haven	8.3	8.2	6.9
Portland, Maine	9.5	8.6	6.7
Providence	7.7	7.9	7.1
Middle Atlantic:			
Binghamton	9.4	12.7	7.4
Buffalo	7.3	7.7	4.4
Newark	8.8	9.4	7.4
New York	9.4	9.0	8.1
Philadelphia	8.2	8.3	7.1
Pittsburgh	7.7	7.9	5.5
Rochester	8.5	8.2	4.6
Scranton	8.2	8.5	6.1
East North-Central:			
Chicago	7.2	9.5	6.6
Cincinnati	7.3	8.7	5.9
Cleveland	7.3	8.2	6.1
Columbus	9.0	9.1	5.8
Detroit	7.0	8.3	6.2
Indianapolis	7.3	8.0	5.7
Milwaukee	6.7	8.9	6.0
Peoria	6.1	9.8	6.6
Springfield, Ill	6.6	10.0	7.4
West North-Central:			
Cedar Rapids	7.8	12.0	5.9
Kansas City	7.0	8.0	5.9
Minneapolis	7.9	10.5	6.3
Omaha	7.0	9.8	6.3
St. Louis	7.4	7.7	6.5
St. Paul	8.5	9.9	6.5
Sioux Falls	7.5	10.9	6.8
Wichita	7.1	8.8	5.6
South Atlantic:			
Atlanta	8.2	8.4	7.6
Baltimore	8.7	10.0	7.7
Charleston, S. C	9.6	10.5	8.4
Columbia, S. C	9.6	11.5	9.2
Jacksonville	8.4	11.4	9.0
Norfolk	9.3	6.4	6.5
Richmond	8.4	9.5	7.9
Savannah	9.0	8.6	8.9
Washington, D. C	8.5	8.9	7.6
Winston-Salem	11.1	13.0	9.4
East South-Central:			
Birmingham	7.4	8.2	6.9
Jackson, Miss	5.0	9.9	5.0
Knoxville	6.1	11.9	7.5
Louisville	7.4	8.0	6.2
Memphis	5.1	5.8	5.3
Mobile	8.2	9.3	4.8
West South-Central:			
Dallas	6.2	9.5	5.6
El Paso	4.6	5.1	2.6
Houston	5.1	7.0	5.0
Little Rock	5.7	7.1	5.6
New Orleans	6.7	8.9	3.8
Oklahoma City	—	—	—
Mountain:			
Albuquerque	6.2	8.5	4.8
Butte	0.2	11.6	7.8
Denver	8.0	7.1	5.0
Salt Lake City	8.7	9.1	3.5
Tucson	2.1	6.6	2.7
Pacific:			
Los Angeles	4.8	3.6	3.4
Portland, Oreg	6.0	9.8	4.7
San Francisco	4.5	4.8	2.6
Seattle	7.3	8.0	5.5
Spokane	9.2	9.6	5.8

Average Retail Prices, January 14, 1936 (cents)

Markets	Apples (lb.)	Bananas (doz. lb.*)	Oranges (doz.)
United States	5.4	*6.6	30.3
New England:			
Boston	5.4	*6.8	33.4
Bridgeport	5.5	*6.3	34.0
Fall River	5.5	*6.7	32.4
Manchester	5.1	*6.7	35.7
New Haven	5.1	22.4	32.5
Portland, Maine	4.5	*7.5	32.6
Providence	5.5	*6.3	33.5
Middle Atlantic:			
Binghamton	5.5	27.0	34.0
Buffalo	4.4	25.6	31.7
Newark	6.0	23.5	35.6
New York	6.5	23.5	35.0
Philadelphia	4.9	20.0	31.0
Pittsburgh	5.0	25.9	30.4
Rochester	4.2	23.1	30.8
Scranton	3.7	20.7	33.7
East North Central:			
Chicago	6.2	*7.5	33.6
Cincinnati	5.6	*6.9	31.3
Cleveland	5.8	*6.7	31.0
Columbus	5.3	*6.1	34.9
Detroit	5.1	*6.3	33.1
Indianapolis	5.4	*7.0	30.0
Milwaukee	5.7	*6.9	30.1
Peoria	6.6	*7.6	31.6
Springfield, Ill	4.9	*7.4	35.7
West North-Central:			
Cedar Rapids	4.8	*7.5	30.8
Kansas City	5.5	*7.4	34.4
Minneapolis	6.7	*7.9	35.3
Omaha	5.8	*8.3	31.5
St. Louis	6.3	*6.8	30.2
St. Paul	6.6	*8.3	34.1
Sioux Falls	6.3	*8.2	33.5
Wichita	6.1	*8.6	32.1
South Atlantic:			
Atlanta	5.0	21.0	25.3
Baltimore	5.2	20.7	31.6
Charleston, S. C	5.5	21.0	22.4
Columbia, S. C	4.1	*7.3	25.9
Jacksonville	5.6	17.2	21.7
Norfolk	5.4	24.5	32.9
Richmond	5.9	25.6	29.7
Savannah	4.9	22.8	22.4
Washington, D. C	5.4	22.1	31.3
Winston-Salem	5.0	*7.1	30.9
East South-Central:			
Birmingham	4.0	*5.4	24.3
Jackson, Miss	—	*5.1	28.5
Knoxville	4.4	*5.7	26.2
Louisville	5.4	*7.0	30.6
Memphis	5.2	*5.9	29.2
Mobile	6.0	16.5	27.7
West South-Central:			
Dallas	5.9	*6.4	38.1
El Paso	6.2	*5.8	27.5
Houston	—	17.2	30.9
Little Rock	5.8	*5.8	26.1
New Orleans	—	*4.4	27.9
Oklahoma City	—	—	—
Mountain:			
Albuquerque	7.7	*7.0	29.5
Butte	5.2	*9.6	31.8
Denver	5.5	*8.4	30.8
Salt Lake City	5.3	*7.9	23.4
Tucson	5.5	*6.0	16.4
Pacific:			
Los Angeles	6.7	*7.0	16.8
Portland, Oreg	4.2	*7.6	27.2
San Francisco	4.6	22.8	25.6
Seattle	3.9	*7.2	27.8
Spokane	3.5	*8.8	32.1

Fruit

A SLIGHT DROP in apple prices from 5.5 cents a pound to 5.4 cents a pound occurred between December 31 and January 14. This change is rather unusual in the middle of winter. Storage holdings of apples on January 1 amounted to about 29 million bushels compared with 27 million bushels on January 1, 1935, and a 5-year average of about 26 million bushels. This would indicate that no marked seasonal rise in prices should be anticipated during the rest of the winter and spring. On the whole it seems likely that apple prices will stay around their present levels for some time.

CARLOT SHIPMENTS of apples to date are about 3,000 cars less than last year but this is probably offset by much heavier movement of apples by motor truck from the eastern apple sections. The export demand for apples is much better than last year on account of a very poor crop in Europe.

ORANGES decreased 0.6 cent a dozen during the first 2 weeks of the year. The total orange crop this year is less than the record crop of a year ago but is still well above average. The winter and spring crop of California navels and Florida and Texas oranges is fairly large. Shipments of oranges in early January were above those of the previous year.

LOW TEMPERATURES were reported in Florida in December but apparently caused no serious injury to citrus fruit. The crop is somewhat unevenly distributed however because of the freeze damage a year ago and is much less than the crop which would have been produced this year if last year's freeze had not occurred. Conditions continue favorable in Texas—trees are reported in excellent condition and the moisture supply is very good. Mild rains and fairly moderate temperatures in Arizona benefited the citrus crop.

Average Retail Prices, January 14, 1936 (cents)

Markets	Corn #2 can	Peas #2 can	Tomatoes #2 can (#2½*)	Peaches #2½ can	Pears #2½ can	Pineapple #2½ can
United States	11.4	16.2	9.3	19.0	22.5	22.5
New England:						
Boston	12.9	16.5	11.5	19.1	22.9	22.1
Bridgeport	13.5	19.9	11.9	20.2	24.9	22.9
Fall River	10.9	17.0	9.2	19.3	22.0	22.6
Manchester	12.3	17.0	10.5	20.8	24.5	23.6
New Haven	13.7	17.0	10.8	20.1	24.5	23.4
Portland, Maine	12.2	16.6	10.0	20.9	24.4	23.6
Providence	10.8	17.7	9.0	19.2	20.1	22.3
Middle Atlantic:						
Binghamton	11.8	17.0	11.0	21.9	24.0	24.0
Buffalo	12.2	15.5	10.1	20.2	22.8	22.9
Newark	11.0	16.8	8.9	17.0	19.9	20.5
New York	11.8	15.8	9.4	17.6	21.2	21.0
Philadelphia	10.9	14.6	9.2	17.2	19.9	20.9
Pittsburgh	10.8	16.2	9.6	19.3	22.4	22.8
Rochester	12.6	16.7	10.4	20.7	23.6	22.8
Scranton	12.3	16.9	9.2	18.6	20.9	22.6
East North-Central:						
Chicago	11.3	15.5	10.2	22.1	25.0	25.0
Cincinnati	12.2	15.8	11.2	19.5	24.0	23.5
Cleveland	12.1	17.3	9.9	21.0	23.4	24.0
Columbus	11.4	17.1	10.0	20.9	25.8	24.8
Detroit	10.6	17.7	9.2	20.1	23.1	23.4
Indianapolis	10.3	15.7	8.9	19.3	26.0	23.3
Milwaukee	10.9	14.5	9.9	21.2	20.1	24.6
Peoria	12.9	17.0	10.3	22.8	25.6	24.7
Springfield, Ill	12.1	18.4	10.9	22.8	26.3	24.6
West North-Central:						
Cedar Rapids	10.9	17.2	10.1	21.8	22.1	23.6
Kansas City	10.0	15.2	8.8	19.4	23.5	23.3
Minneapolis	10.6	15.6	10.4	21.8	24.3	24.8
Omaha	11.1	15.9	10.0	20.8	23.4	23.5
St. Louis	10.6	18.1	8.9	19.5	23.8	23.1
St. Paul	11.5	15.2	10.2	21.8	22.6	24.0
Sioux Falls	10.8	15.0	10.1	21.4	23.7	24.0
Wichita	10.4	17.7	9.0	18.5	23.8	22.0
South Atlantic:						
Atlanta	11.3	17.9	8.9	20.7	23.4	24.2
Baltimore	12.4	15.5	8.4	17.5	21.0	20.2
Charleston, S. C	10.5	17.1	8.4	18.5	22.1	22.8
Columbia, S. C	12.3	19.0	8.5	19.8	24.6	22.9
Jacksonville	11.9	16.4	8.2	17.7	22.7	22.3
Norfolk	11.5	14.4	7.4	20.3	23.9	24.0
Richmond	11.9	17.9	7.0	18.9	23.7	23.7
Savannah	11.8	18.4	8.4	19.8	23.9	23.2
Washington, D. C	10.7	15.4	7.8	17.4	22.6	21.0
Winston-Salem	12.7	22.0	9.3	23.3	25.8	26.7
East South-Central:						
Birmingham	10.8	15.3	8.3	19.4	21.0	24.5
Jackson, Miss	13.8	19.2	9.9	23.4	24.2	24.6
Knoxville	12.4	16.7	8.6	20.2	23.2	23.4
Louisville	11.5	16.2	9.9	20.7	24.7	23.5
Memphis	10.6	16.3	8.6	18.6	22.4	21.8
Mobile	11.6	17.2	8.1	17.6	20.3	19.4
West South-Central:						
Dallas	11.9	19.5	9.2	20.8	26.2	24.6
El Paso	13.0	19.6	9.2	20.7	23.8	23.5
Houston	10.8	16.3	7.3	17.1	20.4	20.6
Little Rock	11.2	16.1	8.6	20.4	24.2	25.0
New Orleans	11.6	18.9	8.8	18.7	24.3	22.1
Oklahoma City	———	———	———	———	———	———
Mountain:						
Albuquerque	12.3	19.8	11.6	21.6	25.2	24.6
Butte	12.2	15.5	10.6	19.4	22.0	24.5
Denver	10.6	16.1	10.1	20.3	22.5	23.3
Salt Lake City	10.9	16.4	7.6	21.5	24.4	22.9
Tucson	11.3	14.9	*11.9	17.9	20.6	20.4
Pacific:						
Los Angeles	11.7	15.7	*11.2	15.6	18.7	18.7
Portland, Oreg	12.8	17.5	*14.0	19.4	20.8	21.6
San Francisco	12.6	15.6	*12.2	16.7	19.2	19.7
Seattle	13.8	17.5	*13.0	20.0	21.1	21.6
Spokane	13.1	18.3	*16.7	21.7	23.5	23.7

ARE FOOD PRICES TOO HIGH?

[Concluded from page 7]

consumption at least that quantity of foodstuffs which past experience has shown to be the normal per capita consumption in this country.

THESE normal per capita food requirements are only what the history of recent years has shown that we do consume. They are not the food supply which we could consume and which we should be able to consume if we are to continue to use the word prosperity in our economic vocabulary. Studies of the Bureau of Home Economics indicate that if those 7½ million nonfarm families, which in 1929 could not spend enough to meet minimum food requirements with a margin of safety, could now have enough income to make such expenditure possible, very substantial increases in the demand for agricultural products would result. Output of fresh fruits and vegetables, excluding potatoes, could be increased by more than 40 percent to meet such an enlarged demand; eggs and butter would increase almost as much; one-third more milk would be required than is now consumed; and the consumption of meat would increase by about 20 percent.

INCREASED agricultural output to meet these larger demands will undoubtedly result if industry can adopt abundance as its goal. All economic interests have a stake in finding the balanced relationships that will bring that about. The consumer interest has a most vital concern in it. And the consumer interest, like all these others, will not find its objective if it works in a vacuum.

CONSUMERS, however much they may feel to the contrary, are not concerned solely with getting lower prices. Their chief concern should be for increased quantities of both farm and factory products at prices which the consumer can afford to pay.

CONSUMERS' best interests will be served when consumers concentrate upon increased production as their major goal. Other interests share this goal, but it is peculiarly the consumer's. Other economic groups are confronted with difficulties which prevent them from consistently working toward this end, to the exclusion of all other goals. Business considerations, they are called, questions that turn upon the rate of profit, the rate of return on investment, the wage rate, selling prices per pound or per ton, direct and overhead costs per unit of output. These are real questions, and it is the part of business, financial, and labor leaders to answer them. But it is the part of the consumer to demand that these questions be answered on the side of MORE, not LESS, that restriction of output be not invariably the solution dictated by business expediency.

IF the consumer interest does not voice this demand, no other will. It will be displaced again and again by the pressure of more immediate practical problems. In the consumer economy, physical units of output are the end in view, prices are the means to that end.

FARMERS are ready to meet the consumer demand for greater output. They will respond with that greater quantity of foodstuffs which we need and have needed when industry, expanding through increased output the income of city consumers beyond the inadequate normal of past years, makes it possible for consumers to pay farmers to expand their production.

"RAISINSEED oil may some day occupy a regular place on your table beside the vinegar cruet", says a trade journal. Those modern alchemists, the researchers in by-products, have been at it again and have developed this new edible oil.

PAINTERS like it for canvas because it spreads rapidly and dries slowly. Epicures esteem it for salads and cooking. Growers use it to keep seeded raisins from sticking together and to make them shine. California growers used to be embarrassed by about four tons of raisin seed a year, which they couldn't do anything with. Now a firm collects the seeds and washes off the pulp that sticks. They recover alcohol and brandy from the wash water. Then they cure, grind, cook, and press, the seeds, just as if they were cottonseed. About 15 percent of the weight is oil. The remaining cake is used for feed, fuel, or fertilizer.

Our Point of View

THE CONSUMERS' GUIDE believes that consumption is the end and purpose of production.

To that end the CONSUMERS' GUIDE emphasizes the consumer's right to full and correct information on prices, quality of commodities, and on costs and efficiency of distribution. It aims to aid consumers in making wise and economical purchases by reporting changes in prices and costs of food and farm commodities. It relates these changes to developments in the agricultural and general programs of national recovery. It reports on cooperative efforts which are being made by individuals and groups of consumers to obtain the greatest possible value for their expenditures.

The producer of raw materials—the farmer—is dependent upon the consuming power of the people. Likewise, the consumer depends upon the sustained producing power of agriculture. The common interests of consumers and of agriculture far outweigh diversity of interests.

While the CONSUMERS' GUIDE makes public official data of the Departments of Agriculture, Labor, and Commerce, the point of view expressed in its pages does not necessarily reflect official policy but is a presentation of governmental and nongovernmental measures looking toward the advancement of consumers' interests.

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